

# New York Saturday Journal

## A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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### CROQUET.

BY HENRI MONTCAIM.

The sun was low in the western skies  
That beautiful summer day;  
And I stood like a fool and looked in her eyes,  
And didn't know what to say;  
But she insisted 'twould be very nice  
To have a game of croquet.

She wore the noblest sailor hat,  
And was dressed in a white pique;  
And I'm very sure I didn't care that,  
If her nose was retroussée.  
You may take my word for it, (*verbum sat!*)  
That she could play croquet.

And she seemed to take a malicious delight  
In monopolizing the play;  
She knocked my ball from left to right  
In a most provoking way;  
Till at length I remarked with a good deal of  
spite,

"Confound croquet!"  
"Your turn at last," she cried as she missed;  
"Every puppy must have his day."  
"Aha!" I shouted, "the balls have kissed,  
Why shouldn't our *de, jenne, pray!*"  
A "glance shot" from her eyes and I caught  
her wrist  
And gave her a—"tight croquet."

The sun went down in the western skies  
The heavens were growing gray;  
I sat in the shadow and looked in her eyes,  
And thought of something to say.  
And what I whispered (as you may surmise),  
Had nothing to do with croquet.

## The Sword Hunters;

OR,

THE LAND OF THE ELEPHANT RIDERS.  
A Sequel to "Lance and Lasso."

BY CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER,  
AUTHOR OF "RED RAJAH," "IRISH CAPTAIN,"  
"LANCE AND LASSO," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER VIII. THE LIONS.

DURING the rest of the day the hunters remained in camp, and reposed their tired horses. Their people brought in the tusks of the elephants, and such choice pieces of the meat as Abou Hassan assured them were good. It was amusing to see the way in which the hungry savages scattered, when the stately Hamrau swordsmen approached the carcass to cut out what they needed. The Arabs paid no more attention to them than if they had been hyenas, and the negroes waited around respectfully till the brave hunters were served.

Only one man tried to be impudent. It was a very large, powerful negro, at work at the big bull. He kept on cutting when young Selim came near, seemingly trusting to the latter being a boy for protection. Selim came near where the big fellow was hacking away at one of the tusks, which had been left half cut out. The young Hamrau ordered him away as if he had been his servant, and the big fellow laughed in a sneering manner, and told him to "make him go if he could."

Manuel Garcia was coming up, gun in hand, to look at the tusks, which he had offered to buy of the Hamraus. Selim had his sword on his shoulder, and Manuel heard him say, quietly:

"Go, dog of a Galla, or I will leave you there in two pieces."

The big negro started up, spear in hand, shouting angrily:

"Try it then, little fellow, and see what will happen to you!"

Young Selim said not another word, but he ran to the negro. As he came, the big man sent his spear at him, and turned to run. But Selim, with wonderful dexterity, parried the flying weapon with his sword, bounded after his enemy, and overtook him in two or three steps. He made but one blow with his razor-like sword, and cut the negro right in half at the waist, so that the unhappy creature never spoke again. Then the boy calmly stooped and wiped his sword, and shook his hand at the frightened crowd beyond, as much as to say:

"Look out! I don't serve you the same way." Manuel was shocked, but he could not help admiring the boldness and skill of the boy, and the Arabs took off the tusks of the elephant in silence, undisturbed by any of the other crowd.

By sunset, all that remained of the ten elephants was their bones; and crowds of men, women and children were trooping off to the hills, with huge loads of meat on their shoulders.

While our travelers were resting in camp, they learned a good deal about the game from the Hamraus. Abou Hassan told them there were elephants, rhinoceroses, and plenty of giraffes and antelopes, a little further up the river; and promised to show them a lake, where they should have all the sport they wanted.

Accordingly, during the day, they got their guns in order, and made ready for their trip; and, as soon as the sun rose next morning they were on their way to the lake. They made an easy journey of some fifteen miles through a country that grew greener at every step, and at sunset they went into camp at the borders of a beautiful lake surrounded by hills. Their camp was in a very pretty little wood, and the country was sprinkled over with copes of low, scrubby thorns, in the midst of real green grass, the first they had seen since leaving Europe, for everything in the country was burned up by the sun.

They could see that Abou Hassan was right. Herds of antelopes were feeding about in full view, like cattle, and the long necks of a number of giraffes were visible, here and there,



The animal squealed and reared up, only to be pulled back sharply by the self-possessed Bullard.

Rhinoceroses were scattered about, in pairs, and a few had calves with them.

Manuel took a telescope, and climbed up a tree, while the rest were pitching camp. He watched the game with great interest, and counted four different kinds of rhinoceros in sight. Two of them were white, and very large. They were shaped just like huge pigs, but as tall as a horse. One kind had a single horn on its snout, the other had two, the front one being about four feet long. The two other kinds were black, and differed in the same way, having one horn or two.

The rhinoceroses seemed to be stupid, lazy beasts, lying down a good deal; but suddenly one of them seemed to go crazy. It was a two horned black fellow, feeding quietly. Manuel saw a large antelope, with horns shaped just like corkscrews, pass near this stupid looking beast. What he did, Manuel could not see, but the rhinoceros took offense at him, and made a vicious charge at the antelope, which ran away, bounding over a low bush like a bird. When the rhinoceros found the antelope was gone, the beast seemed to think the bush had insulted him, for he rushed at it furiously, rooted it up with his long horn, and sent it flying in the air, when he caught it again, and did not rest till he had pounded it to bits.

Manuel laughed heartily and asked Abou Hassan to explain the scene when he was in camp that night.

"The rhinoceros is a fool," replied the Arab. "He is subject to fits of fury about nothing at all, and is very dangerous to hunt, for he can run nearly as fast as a horse, and goes on three legs as well as four. We always have to cut him in both sides before we can get him safe."

The travelers made their camp secure that night, for Abou Hassan told them there were many lions about, that would steal their horses. So they made a stiff fence of thorn bushes, and lighted big fires, behind which they were secure, for the lion will not face fire as a general rule, at least not in that part of Africa. As we have seen, the lions of Algeria are very different beasts. They seem to fear nothing.

That night the travelers could hear the roar of lions all round them, and several of the beasts came close to the fence. Tom Bullard wanted to go out and have a shot, but the Arabs persuaded him not to go.

"My white brother will only get killed for nothing," said Abou Hassan. "God made the night for the lion and the day for man. Leave the lion his kingdom. In the morning we will show you how we kill them."

So Tom was forced to remain quiet, and the lions had it all their own way outside. One of them pulled down some animal at the water side, for the boys heard a great splashing and roaring, and afterward all the beasts began to growl and fight over the carcass, whatever it was, till it grew light, just before sunrise.

Then Abou Hassan said that it was a good time to go out, for the carcass would keep the lions by the water, and sure enough it turned out as he said. The moon had not yet gone down, and the light in the east was increasing every moment, when the boys rode out of camp, to find the lions. There they were, five altogether, three lions, a lioness, and a half-grown cub, finishing their meal on the carcass of a young giraffe, which they had dragged up from the water's edge.

The Hamraus galloped out to get between them and the cover, and then the lions didn't seem to know what to do, for they are cowardly beasts in daylight. They growled and grumbled a good deal, but that didn't scare the

Hamraus. They stood firm till the sun rose, and then the fight began in real earnest.

Tom Bullard had profited by his experience of the day before, and had a supply of rifle shells, as well as bullets, for Jack's success had told him what terrible things they were, bursting inside and tearing the most ferocious creature to pieces. But he was too proud of his shooting to use those on anything short of an elephant, and he was the first to try a shot at the lions, while they still stood undecided.

Turning his horse round to take a good aim, he leveled his rifle at the head of the lioness, and fired. The animal was looking at Abou Hassan at the time, and offered a fair temple shot.

"Plug" uttered a shout of triumph, for the lioness dropped, and Abou Hassan cried out:

"Well done, white brother!"

The moment the shot was fired the three lions and the cub turned, and charged. Manuel Garcia, who was on the opposite side from the Hamraus, bounding forward in a cloud of dust. Manuel and Jack fired together, and were answered by loud roars. The next moment Manuel's horse was knocked down by one of the lions, Manuel himself leaping off as it fell, a trick in which he had become expert among the gauchos of South America.

The young Spaniard had a double-barreled breech-loader, and with the desperation natural to his dangerous position, he fired right into the lion's head, as he thought, almost touching it with the muzzle of his gun. He heard a terrible roar through the smoke, and the next moment was sent flying to one side, like a kitten.

He heard shouts and yells as he fell over, and two shots, and then the four Hamraus dashed past where he lay, as hard as they could tear. Manuel tried to get up, but he found his side so painful he could hardly move, and he felt very faint. He looked up, expecting to see the lion coming at him, but there it lay, stone dead, over his dead horse, and the others were gone. Then up came Bullard and Curtis, in great anxiety, to see if he was badly hurt.

"Oh! Wiseman," cried Tom, almost crying, "are you most dead, old fellow? Don't die, Wiseman! I killed the lion, just as he hit you that lick with his paw that sent you kiting. Where did he hit you?"

"Here, on my side, I believe," said Manuel, faintly. "Where are the rest?"

"Out there, catching Jesse!" said Bullard, vindictively. "Oh, Wiseman, if you could only sit up, and see them Arabs at 'em. There, that's it, old fellow; lean on me. Now look!"

Manuel looked, and almost forgot his pain in the excitement.

There were the four Hamrau Arabs, not a hundred yards off, fighting the two old lions, the fiercest of all. The horsemen seemed to be quite devoid of fear, for they swooped down at the lions, full speed, and cut at them as they passed. The lions charged after them, and the oldest one made a desperate attack on Abou Hassan, leaping after his horse, and getting one claw on its haunches. But the fearless Hamrau dealt him a fierce cut in the face, that drove the lion back, howling, and at the same moment Hamet came dashing up behind, on the right of the lion, stood up in his stirrups, and discharged a blow with both hands at the creature's back, taking it across the loins with his sword. It finished Mr. Lion's business, for he fell down; and when he tried to rise, he dragged his hind legs powerless on the ground, and could not spring. He was finished with a second cut on the neck. The other lion was a wary old fellow, who stood still, facing his

foes, and seemed determined not to be flanked. As for the cub, he was running his "level best" toward the forest, and no one seemed to care where he went.

But the old lion was no easy conquest. They tried to entice him to charge, but he was too knowing. He kept making short rushes, snarling and growling, at the horses, but always keeping his face to his foes, and giving them no opportunity to serve him as they had his brother.

And then the Hamraus showed what splendid hunters they were. They drew off from the lion, as if they were going to leave him alone, and he, thinking himself safe, turned and bounded toward the forest to escape. Down rushed the four hunters like a whirlwind, two on each side, and each aimed a cut at him in passing. Too late the lion turned, for Abou Hassan's sword caught him on the back of the neck, as he sprang at Hamet, cut clear through the thick mane and strong hair, and took the great head half off, with the tremendous blow.

And down fell that lion, dead, while Abou Hassan and his brothers rode gently back to where Manuel was sitting down, feeling very sick. Then they told him how his first shot had only wounded the lion, who had knocked down his horse. His second shot had gone through the beast's neck, only making it more savage.

"And then," said Curtis, "he sprang at you, and gave you a side blow with his paw, and Tom and I fired together, and I guess we both hit him. Anyway, he dropped."

Then they examined Manuel's side, and found that the lion's paw had bruised him fearfully, but by great good luck had broken no bones. And that little stroke, made about as a cat would toss a ball of yarn aside, might have kept Manuel in camp for over a week, but for the Arabs, who cured him in a very singular manner. They wrapped him up in the warm skin of the lion which had knocked him over; and when he woke, next morning, his bruises were almost gone, and he felt nearly well. This remedy is always practiced by the Arabs in case of bruises.

After a few days' rest, our friends resumed their hunting, and their next adventure was met with, after a great black rhinoceros.

### CHAPTER IX. THE BORELE.

The application of the warm lion's skin cured Manuel's bruises in twenty-four hours, but he had received a shock that took him some days to recover from. When he was able to mount his horse it was several days after, and he did not care to go too near any more lions.

"I shall fire shells at them," he said. "They are sure to disable the beasts, and I shall keep at a safe distance."

Bullard and Curtis, however, had acquired somewhat of a contempt for the lions, for the animals did not come round their camp any more except at night. In the daytime, after their first battle, they could not see one. The beasts kept hid in close thickets, and were very scarce; for they seemed to have destroyed the principal family of the neighborhood; and one family is as much as most localities will support, in the way of lions.

But before Manuel was able to leave camp, Jack Curtis and Bullard had some pretty good hunting, and harried the large game of the neighborhood to some effect. The first day they went out Hamet went with them, for Abou Hassan and his brothers had gone to their own tribe, which they promised to bring

back with them, to encamp along with the generous white strangers. Manuel was very glad of this, for he wanted to see the Hamraus at home, and he knew that their presence would be a great protection from the thieving negroes of the country. These last had become a great nuisance, hanging around the camp to beg and pilfer what they could, and Manuel knew that they would not come around when the terrible Sword Hunters were encamped near them. So Abou Hassan left Hamet to show game, and rode off to his own people, whom he promised to bring back that night.

Curtis and Bullard went out soon after daylight with Hamet, seeing numerous herds of antelopes on the way, none of which did they disturb. The pretty creatures kept at a wary distance, but the hunters could watch their motions with a telescope to great advantage. There were many different kinds, of all sizes, from the tiny gazelle, with legs no thicker than a pencil, to the stately eland, with a body as large as an ox, the magnificent koodoo, with horns like corkscrews, at least four feet long, and the onyx, a large antelope, in shape much like a goat, but as tall as a donkey, with horns quite straight and very sharp. Then there was the sable antelope, as black as jet, with tamed points, the great roan antelope, and at least a dozen other kinds we have no time to mention. There were tall, graceful giraffes and sullen, lowering buffaloes, each kind in its own separate herds, feeding peacefully.

But Bullard cared for none of them. He had come out to shoot a rhinoceros, and he was bound to have one, the more horns the better. He was not long in finding what he wanted, for the rhinoceros is an easy beast to hunt up. Before they had been out half an hour they saw two together, asleep under a tree at some distance. There was no cover all the way, and Hamet warned them that the rhinoceros has a remarkably keen scent. Therefore they had to ride round a long way before they got to leeward of the creatures, and slowly advanced toward them.

The rhinoceroses were both of the black, two-horned kind, considered the most ferocious of any, and known to the natives as the *borele*. They lay half asleep, with their heads turned to leeward, trusting to their noses to tell them of danger on the other side. But the sight of the rhinoceros is very poor, and he has a habit of shutting his eyes when he charges, so that our hunters anticipated little trouble in getting up to them. Hamet set them the example how to approach. The active Arab threw himself down alongside of his horse, with one arm around the animal's neck, and his leg over the saddle. In this manner he hung alongside of his horse, keeping the animal as a shield between him and the boreles. Bullard had often practiced this trick as a boy on the plains, and Jack had learned it during his trip to the estancia at Buenos Ayres. The two therefore imitated Hamet as well as they knew how, and all three advanced on their sleeping game at an easy walk.

The two rhinoceroses lay blinking and snoring, just like two pigs, and if they saw the horsemen, probably took them for antelopes of some strange kind, for the hunters would sometimes let the reins loose, when of course the horses would stoop their heads to graze. And so the whole approach had a very natural air.

At last they had arrived within about fifty yards, when Hamet gave the signal, and the three instantly started up in their saddles.

But instead of the boreles being frightened at the sudden apparition the reverse was the case. They saw it quick enough. Almost before the hunters were up, the rhinoceroses were on their feet. They came up on all four legs together, like an India rubber ball, and each uttered a sort of whistling squeal, something like a pig. And then, with an agility unexpected from their clumsy frames, both charged together at the hunters, full of fury.

"Look out, Pickle," shouted Bullard, and as he spoke he sighted the head of the left hand borele with his rifle. Crack! went the gun, and Bullard heard the sharp smack of the bullet in the beast's head. But the rhinoceros did not seem to heed it, for he charged more viciously than ever. Tom's horse spun round on its haunches like a top, and "put, like a streak," as "Plug" afterward observed.

Curtis fired a copper rifle shell into the other one, and saw it blow up on the beast's forehead. This was the female borele. But she did not seem to mind it any more than a musket-bite, and Curtis's horse, with great prudence, followed Bullard as hard as he could tear. Jack did not fall off this time, a fact principally due to his being of the same mind with his horse, and turning with him.

And the two hunters, instead of putting their foes to flight, were just doing their level best to escape from the creatures they had started to kill. As for Hamet, he shied off to one side at the first onset, and the rhinoceroses did not appear to see him, for they passed on after the boys. But no sooner were they by, than down swooped Hamet after the female borele, spurring his horse desperately, and drawing his sword as he went.

Jack turned one way and Bullard the other, with the boreles after them, the horses thoroughly frightened, and running their best. But the clumsy, piglike beasts behind gave them all the running they wanted for some minutes, before Hamet could overtake the cow borele. When he did, he made a tremendous cut at her hind leg, and divided the sinew fairly, making her hop on three legs. She did not appear to mind it, however, running nearly as fast as ever, and it was not till Hamet had made a second blow at the other leg, that she came to a stand.



When she did, she dropped, for both legs were utterly crippled. At the same moment the other bore, which had been chasing Tom Bullard, suddenly caught scent of him. The beast had chased him in a semi-circle, till it had got to leeward, and caught a whiff for the first time. Instantly it stopped, gave a sniff of disgust, wheeled round and ran away. The same creature it had chased before became suddenly terrible when it was discovered to be a man.

No sooner was the bore off, than away went Tom after it. As he went, he crammed a fresh cartridge into his gun, and spurred his horse hard, to keep near the flying game. Curtis and Hamet both joined in, but Tom had the start by fifty yards, and was not twenty feet from the bore, when the brute turned. He had not much distance to make up, therefore, but it taxed his little horse to its utmost to do that much. However, by a vigorous dose of the long spurs, he managed to creep up to within ten feet, and further than that his horse would not go. The animal remembered the chase it had undergone before, and feared a fresh charge.

So Tom was forced to fire from where he was, or lose his game. He had a shell this time in his rifle, and he took a hasty aim behind the shoulder of bore, and fired. Clap! went the ball into the tough hide, and then bore stopped short, quivered and shook, fell on its knees, rose again, and staggered along slowly, shaking its heavy head in evident distress. Tom had another cartridge in before the beast was fairly up, and sent a second shell into bore's body. That finished his business. As the second fearful missile exploded in the poor brute's lungs, it stopped again, trembled all over, and fell over on its side, dying. Tom was a merciful fellow, if he was a hunter. He reloaded with a steel-pointed bullet, jumped off his horse, and put the bullet into the dying bore's brain, to end its torments. Then Curtis and the Arab came up, and found him examining the body for the trace of bullets.

It was made quite plain why he had not killed the rhinoceros with the first shot in the forehead. The creature's head is a mass of solid bone, as hard as a rock, and the brain is very small and situated not far from the nose, where the monstrous shield of horn renders it perfectly invulnerable. A side shot is the only chance by which the brain can be reached, and then the shot is very difficult.

But it is easy enough to strike it in the lungs, and when an explosive bullet is used, even the tough rhinoceros, which will carry off fifty common balls and live, succumbs at once to the suffocating gases. And from that day forth, Tom never used anything else on elephants and other large game, for his experience with the rhinoceros had converted him entirely to the use of shells, which he had before condemned as unsportsmanlike.

"But when a fellow has to pin his life to his gun," remarked Tom to Curtis, "it don't do to be too particular; so we'll blow them all to Scratch for the future."

They cut out the horns of the two rhinoceroses is a very curious affair in this respect. It does not grow out of the bone like a cow's horn, but is simply stuck on to the skin in some manner, so that if you cut away the piece of skin, off comes the horn with it. They found it of very tough, fine horn, and solid all the way through. The bore has not such long horns as the great white rhinoceros, called the *kaobaba*. This beast is near as large as an elephant, and its horn is sometimes four feet long, and very white and clear. The white rhinoceros is a peaceful, timid beast, rarely charging, except in defense of its calf, and much slower of foot than the bore. The horns of both seem to be used to root with, like pigs, and they fear up strong, thorny bushes with them like tufts of grass, eating thorns and all, for the rhinoceroses have palates that are as hard as iron.

Our hunters returned home with their trophies, and tried some rhinoceros meat that night. It was uncommonly good eating and reminded them of veal. They found about Hassan's family or tribe, forty men, all told, with women and children, going into camp.

## CHAPTER X.

TOM AND THE WILD ASS.

THAT evening the principal men of the little tribe of Sword Hunters were gathered around the camp-fire of our three friends. When I say the "tribe" of Sword Hunters, you must not think that they were all of the Hamraus, who are a powerful and numerous tribe. This was only the sub-tribe or band, which about Hassan and his brothers belonged, and was composed of one single family, from the great grandfather, an aged Arab over a hundred years old, down to about Hassan and his brothers, and their children.

The old chief, or *sheikh*, as the Arabs call him, was a magnificent-looking old man, tall and erect as the youngest there, and riding his gray mare like a centaur. His descendants obeyed his slightest beck and nod as if it were a law, and the old *sheikh* was an absolute monarch in his band, without a rebel among them all.

Manuel and the boys were wonderfully taken with this stately old gentleman, with his long, snow-white beard and princely manner, who behaved as though he had been used to good society all his life. And so he was, for the noble tribes of Arabs are all *gentlemen*, in the truest sense of the word—that is to say, always polite, hospitable, brave, generous, and kind to all.

It was interesting to notice how they all venerated the old man, listening to every word with respect, and not contradicting. He, on his part, was very kind to every one, and seemed especially fond of children.

The boys found him a perfect mine of information on hunting, for Sheikh Haroun Abd-el-Kerim had wielded a sword in the chase over eighty years before, and knew every bush in the country.

His name—Haroun Abd-el-Kerim—signifies "Aaron, servant of the Merciful," and all the Arab names have a signification, except the proper names, such as Hamet, etc.

Hassan means John, Hamet is a variety of Mohammed, Abdallah means "Servant of God," Selim is a variety of Islam, or the "Chosen People," and most of our Bible names have Arab equivalents.

"Are there any beasts so dangerous, oh *sheikh*," asked Manuel, "that you cannot kill them with the sword?"

"Not one," said the *sheikh*, quietly. "If we can close with them they cannot escape. But some few, very few, are too swift for us."

"Ah, I suppose you mean antelopes?"

"No," said Sheikh Haroun. "We can come up with any antelope but one, after a hard chase. But the gazelle laughs at the speed of the horse, and the wild ass is even swifter. There is no horse can equal him, and he mocks at the best in our tribe."

Tom Bullard, who was listening, pricked his ears.

"How big are these wild asses?" he asked.

"As tall as a horse. Taller than mine," the Arab answered.

"Are there any here?"

"Nay," said Sheikh Haroun; "the wild ass loves the desert. The nearest place to find them is at the border of the desert, a day's journey from here. There is a troop of them, which come to drink at a spring, at the foot of a mountain there, and they have come since I was a boy. We have lain in wait for them many a time, but no man has been near enough to see the color of their eyes, though many have tried."

"Do you think I could catch one?" demanded Tom, suddenly.

"I know I can; and if you'll show me where they are, I'll show you how we catch wild horses in America."

Sheikh Haroun did not answer for a minute. He was too polite to tell Tom he was a fool, but he thought it. In the first place he had never heard of a wild horse, for in Africa there are none except tame. And in the next place, he knew the swiftness of the wild ass to be prodigious.

"You are a stranger, my son," he said, presently, "and you do not know the wild ass. We have no wild horses here. You say you have them in your country, and of course you must be right; but they are not like our wild asses, or else your horses must be much better than ours. I will show you where they are, but you can do nothing with them, except perhaps to shoot them, and that would be foolish, for they are not made to eat."

"Well," persisted Tom, stubbornly, "if you will show me the place, I will promise you to ride a wild ass into your camp inside of ten days from the time I see them. You have shown us how you hunt, and now we will show you how we do the thing in Texas."

So it was settled that they should move camp the next day, for Tom was all on fire to catch a wild ass, and he felt confident that he could do it by practicing a plan used in Texas. What that plan is, you will perceive when you shall hear what Tom did.

Manuel and Jack were as incredulous as the old *sheikh*, till Tom explained the mode of doing things, and then they were as anxious to try it as he was, for they felt that, with such swift steeds to ride, they could catch anything in the country with ease, from the elephant to the swiftest antelope.

So the next morning they once more broke camp, and traveled all day long to the southwest, the country growing drier and more barren as they proceeded, till the afternoon brought them to the foot of the mountain the chief had spoken of, which was the extreme spur of a range, that thenceforward barred the green country from the Libyan desert. As they came in sight of the sandy plain below, Sheikh Haroun pointed to a clump of palm trees, and then to some moving dots on the plain.

"Behold the spring," he said. "The wild asses are coming to drink at it. They will come again in the morning. But you cannot catch them."

Tom drew out his telescope and inspected the moving dots. They were indeed wild asses, but very different from our donkeys and mules. These were splendid creatures, the old males standing sixteen hands high, with powerful limbs, broad chests, and arching necks. The long ears were the only assine features about them, and they were not near as long as those of the domestic ass.

Tom suddenly started, as if struck with an idea.

"I'll try it," he muttered. "I could not have a better chance than now."

At his desire, Manuel halted the caravan where they were, while Tom dismounted, and crept forward, behind rocks and bushes, till he was within about twenty yards of the spring, where the wild asses were coming to drink. Then he lay down behind a rock, and awaited their approach.

The wind was blowing from the desert toward him, so that there was no danger of their scenting him, and he had hidden his advance so well that they had not caught sight of him, attracted as they were by the distant caravan, going into camp where Tom had left them.

The troop of wild asses came nearer and nearer, gazing curiously at the caravan, but anticipating no evil. Tom counted fifteen altogether; of which three were magnificent males, of a bright sorrel color, with the peculiar black cross-stripe on the withers, characteristic of their race; and four were little colts, of different sizes, up to two years old.

The young Texan rested his rifle on the fork of the branch of the bush that hid him, and patiently waited the coming of the troop. He was going to try a very hazardous experiment, peculiar to his native plains, called "creasing." It requires a first-class shot to try it successfully, but, when well performed, furnishes the surest way of capturing a swift animal yet known. Tom felt sufficient confidence in his skill to try it. He had brought with him several straps, which he proposed to use, if his shot was successful, to secure his prize, and he already counted on it as his own.

The wild asses came slowly down to the spring, often stopping and looking suspiciously at the caravan, and then coming on again. At last the leader of the herd put down his head, and drank delicately, and then pricked up his ears, and looked round away from Tom.

It was the chance the young man was looking for. The next minute he took a long and steady aim at the wild creature. He aimed just behind the ears, where the arching neck joined the head, and intended his bullet to *graze the spot, just stunning the animal*. Tom's nerves were like iron, and his eye perfectly true, as he glanced through the sights. He pulled the trigger, and through the flash and smoke saw the wild ass drop, as if dead, while the rest scoured away, in a cloud of dust, and went out of sight.

Out rushed Tom, rifle in hand, to view the prize, and found, to his intense joy, that the creature breathed. The bullet had marked a little "crease," exactly where it was aimed, and the wild creature was *completely stunned*. A hair's breadth lower, and it would have been killed.

Tom lost no time in looking. He produced from his pocket a strong strap, doubled up one fore leg of the wild ass, where it lay, and strapped it tight, just as circus-men had been in the habit of doing for many years, before Rarey made the secret public.

In a moment more he had a strong halter on the animal's head, and secured it just in time, for, as he stepped away, the wild ass struggled to get up, having recovered from the momentary stun.

And the way that creature struggled was exciting to see. Tom had never seen the like. The boy, as we know, was a splendid rider, and had on long spurs. Taking his advantage as the ass put out its fore leg to rise, he was on its back before it could get up. The halter was a strong cord, knotted around the animal's under jaw, with a rein on each side, and Bullard held on to it like grim death. The ass had one fore leg doubled up and strapped there, but it rose upon three legs with a squeal of rage, and com-

menced to kick. Yes, actually to *kick* with both hind legs, *standing on one fore leg to do it!* A horse could not have performed this feat, but the wild ass, like the zebra, has a peculiar hardness and strength of muscle that enables it to perform deeds that are impossibilities to a horse, as Rarey found when he tamed the zebra. For a few minutes Bullard had hard work to retain his seat.

But even the wild ass is subject to fatigue. With one leg tied up, it could not struggle to any advantage, and the boy had a terrible hold upon the beast. It reared upright and came over backward, and Bullard was on his feet unhurt, and up again before the wild creature could rise. It tried to bite him in the leg, but Bullard was expecting the trick, and had a heavy whip hanging to his wrist, which he curled around the slim muzzle of the wild ass with a sharp lash every time it tried it. The animal was mad with rage. It squealed and reared up, only to be pulled back sharply by the self-possessed Bullard. He heard shouts of admiration from the Arabs, who were now galloping up at full speed, in the notion of assisting him in some way.

But Tom Bullard needed no assistance. He was bound to conquer that wild ass if he had to fight all night, and the sun was nearly set already. With a vague notion of tiring the creature out, he dug in his spurs till they fished the blood, and wrenched his head round to the desert. The furious beast gave a tremendous bound, and suddenly darted forward, on three legs as it was, swifter than any horse could run—away, away, into the fast-darkening desert, while Tom, with a wild halloo, laid on his whip to make it go faster.

"Now I've got you!" muttered he, setting his teeth as he flew on. "We'll see who can stand this longest, you or I."

And away went the two, out into the silent desert, where the stars looked softly down upon them the wild ass leaving the horses far behind, and making Bullard think:

"If he runs like this on *three legs*, what chance should I have had with him on *four*?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 332.)

## A LIFE'S SHADOW.

BY WALTER E. FITZGERALD.

Oh, sweetly-scented blossoms that so soon must fade away,  
Ye tell a solemn story of the fate of all that's gay;  
Ye blossom now in beauty and court the amorous sun

When I scorn your humble worship when the summer's day is done;  
Then, lifeless, lonely, loveless—the smile that warmed you fled—  
Your tiny ghosts will wander with the shade of beauty dead;  
And in some drear aisle leafless, where love once ruled so fair,  
They'll stoop in reverent silence o'er my soul in sorrow there!

My soul that dwelt with sadness remote from realms of peace,  
Where love and joy united give to grief and pain release,  
Save when it rapt, lingered near that brightly blooming plain  
Where Love embowered in roses sang a wondrous sweet refrain;  
Where once arose a vision of rare tenderness and grace  
That swept with fleeting splendor o'er my soul's sad, solemn face!  
Then all its world was brightened with a momentary gleam,  
And thrilled with magic cadences of joyfulness serene.

But ah! the vision faded, for such love was not for him  
Who through life's lonely watches sang a hopeless, And dying, told his story to the spirits of blossoms dead.

That mourn the light and glory of the smiling sun,  
Full sad their lay of longing until Time hath lapsed away,  
And I passed from splendor into darkness and decay;  
And then the minstrel's strings—seraphims of love and peace—  
Will thrum in solemn sweetness and will bid their sorrow cease.

## LA MASQUE,

## The Vailed Sorceress;

OR,

## THE MIDNIGHT QUEEN.

A TALE OF ILLUSION, DELUSION, AND MYSTERY.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,  
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "THE TWIN SISTERS," "AN AWFUL MYSTERY,"  
"ERMINIE," ETC.

## CHAPTER XV.

LEOLINE'S VISITORS.

If things were done twice—but they are not, and never will be, while this whirligig world of mistakes spins round, and all Adam's children, to the end of the chapter, will continue sinning to-day and repenting to-morrow, falling the next and beavelling the day after. If Leoline had gone to bed directly, like a good, dutiful little girl, as Sir Norman ordered her, she would have saved herself a good deal of trouble and tears; but Leoline and sleep were destined to shake hands and turn their backs on each other that night. It was time for all honest folks to be in bed, and the dark-eyed beauty knew it, too, but she had no notion of going, nevertheless. She stood in the center of the room, where he had left her, with a spot like a scarlet roseberry on either cheek; a soft, half-smile on the perfect mouth, and a light, inexpressible tender and dreamy, in those Artesian wells of beauty—her eyes. Most young girls of green and tender years, suffering from "Love's young dream," and that sort of thing, have just that soft, shy, brooding look, whenever their thoughts happen to turn to their particular beloved; and there are few eyes so ugly that it does not beautify, even should they be as cross as two sticks. You should have seen Leoline standing in the center of her pretty room, with her bright rose-satin glancing, and glittering, and flowing over rug and mat; with her black waving hair clustering and curling like shining floss silk; with a rich, warm shimmer of pearls on the pale smooth forehead and bewitching, beyond doubt; and it was just as well for Sir Norman's peace of mind that he did not see her, for he was bad enough without that. So she stood thinking tenderly of him for a half-hour or so, quite undisturbed by the storm; and how strange it was that she had risen up that very morning expecting to be one man's bride, and that she should rise up the next, expecting to be another's. She could not realize it at all; and with a little sigh—half-pleasure, half-presentiment—she walked to the window, drew the curtain, and looked out at the night. All was peaceful and serene; the moon was full to overflowing, and a great deal of extra light ran over the brim; quite a quantity of stars were out, and were twinkling pleasantly down at the dark little planet below, that went round and round with grim stoicism, and paid no attention to anybody's business but its own. She saw the heaps of black, charred ashes that the rush of rain had quenched; she saw the still

and empty street; the frowning row of gloomy houses opposite, and the man on guard before one of them. She had watched that man all day, thinking, with a sick shudder, of the plague-stricken prisoners he guarded, and reading its piteous inscription, "Lord have mercy on us!" till the words seemed branded on her brain. While she looked now, an upper window was opened, a night-cap was thrust out, and a voice from its cavernous depths hailed the guard.

"Robert! I say, Robert!"

"Well?" said Robert, looking up.

"Master and missus be gone at last, and the rest won't live till morning."

"Won't they?" said Robert, phlegmatically; "what a pity! Get 'em ready, and I'll stop the dead-cart when it comes round."

Just as he spoke, the well-known rattle of wheels, the loud ringing of the bell, and the monotonous cry of the driver, "Bring out your dead! bring out your dead!" echoed on the pale night's silence; and the pest-cart came rumbling and jolting along with its load of death. The watchman hailed the driver, according to promise, and they entered the house together, brought out one long, white figure, and then another, and threw them on top of the ghastly heap.

"We'll have three more for you in an hour or so—don't forget to come round," suggested the watchman.

"All right!" said the driver, as he took his place, whipped his horse, rung his bell, and jogged along nonchalantly to the plague-pit.

Sick at heart, Leoline dropped the curtain, and turned round to see—somebody else standing at her elbow. She had been quite alone when she looked out; she was alone no longer; there had been no noise, yet some one had entered, and was standing beside her. A tall figure, all in black, with its sweeping velvet robes spangled with stars of golden rubies, a perfect figure of incomparable grace and beauty. It had worn a cloak that had dropped lightly from its shoulders, and lay on the floor, and the long hair streamed in darkness over shoulder and waist. The face was masked, the form stood erect and perfectly motionless, and the scream of surprise and consternation that arose to Leoline's lips died out in wordless terror. Her noiseless visitor perceived it, and touching her arm lightly with one little white hand, said in her sweetest and most exquisite of tones:

"My child, do not tremble so, and do not look so deathly white. You know me, do you not?"

"You are La Masque?" said Leoline, trembling with nervous dread.

"I am, and no stranger to you; though perhaps you think so. Is it your habit every night to look out of your window in full dress until morning?"

"How did you enter?" asked Leoline, her curiosity overcoming for a moment even her fear.

"Through the door. Not a difficult thing, either, if you leave it wide open every night, as it is this."

"Was it open?" said Leoline, in dismay. "I never knew it."

"Ah! then it was not you who went out last night?"

"It was—was—" Leoline's cheeks were scarlet; "it was a friend!"

"A somewhat late hour for one's friends to visit them," said La Masque, sarcastically; "and you should learn the precaution of seeing them to the door and fastening it after them."

"Rest assured I shall do so for the future," said Leoline, with a look that would have reminded Sir Norman of Miranda, had he seen it. "I scarcely expected the honor of any more visits, particularly from strangers, to-night."

"Civil, that! Will you ask me to sit down, or am I to consider myself an unreasonable intruder, and depart?"

"Madame, will you do me the honor to be seated. The hour, as you say, is somewhat unreasonable, and you will oblige me by letting me know to what I am indebted for the pleasure of this visit, as quickly as possible."

There was something quite dignified about Mistress Leoline, as she swept rustling past La Masque, sunk into the pillow depths of her lounge, and motioned her visitor to a seat with a slight and graceful wave of her hand. Not but that in her secret heart she was a good deal frightened, for something under her pink satin corsage was going pit-a-pat at a wonderful rate; but she thought that betraying such a feeling would not be the thing. Perhaps the tall, dark figure saw it, and smiled behind her mask; but outwardly she only leaned lightly against the back of the chair, and glanced discreetly at the door.

"Are you sure we are quite alone?"

"Quite."

"Because," said La Masque, in her low, silvery tones, "what I have come to say is not for the ears of any third person living."

"We are entirely alone, madame," replied Leoline, opening her black eyes very wide. "Prudence is gone, and I do not know when she will be back."

"Prudence will never come back," said La Masque, quietly.

"Madame!"

"My dear, do not look so shocked—it is none of her fault. You know she deserted you for fear of the plague."

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, that did not save her; nay, it even brought on what she dreaded so much. Your nurse is plague-stricken, my dear, and lies ill unto death in the pest-house in Finsbury Fields."

"Oh, dreadful!" exclaimed Leoline, while every drop of blood fled from her face. "My poor, poor old nurse!"

"Your poor, poor old nurse left you without much tenderness when she thought you dying of the same disease," said La Masque, quietly.

"Oh, that is nothing. The suddenness, the shock—drove her to it. My poor, dear Prudence."

"Well, you can do nothing for her now," said La Masque, in a tone of slight impatience. "Prudence is beyond all human aid, and so—let her rest in peace. You were carried to the plague-pit yourself, for dead, were you not?"

"Yes," answered the pale lips, while she shivered all over at the recollection.

"And was saved by—who were you saved by, my dear?"

"By two gentlemen."

"Oh, I know that; what were their names?"

"One was Mr. Ormiston, the other was," hesitating and blushing vividly, "Sir Norman Kingsley."

La Masque leaned across her chair, and laid one dainty finger lightly on the girl's hot cheek.

"And for which is that blush, Leoline?"

"Madame, was it only to ask me questions you came here?" said Leoline, drawing proudly back, though the hot red spot grew hotter and redder; "if so, you will excuse my declining to answer any more."

"Child, child!" said La Masque, in a tone so strangely sad that it touched Leoline; "do not be angry with me. It is no idle curiosity that sent me here at this hour to ask impertinent questions, but a claim that I have upon you, stronger than that of any one else in the world."

Leoline's beautiful eyes opened wider yet.

"A claim upon me! How! why? I do not understand."

"All in good time. Will you tell me something of your past history, Leoline?"

"Madame Masque, I have no history to tell. All my life I have lived alone with Prudence; that is the whole of it in nine words."

La Masque half laughed.

"Short, sharp, and decisive. Had you never a father or mother?"

"There is a slight probability I may have had at some past period," said Leoline, sighing; "but none that I ever knew."

"Why does not Prudence tell you?"

"Prudence is only my nurse, and says she has nothing to tell. My parents died when I was an infant, and left me in her care—that is her story."

"A likely one enough, and yet I see by your face that you doubt it."

"Do doubt it! There are a thousand little outward things that make me fancy it is false, and an inward voice that assures me it is so."

"Then let me tell you that inward voice tells falsehoods, for I know that your father and mother are both dead these fourteen years!"

Leoline's great black eyes were fixed on her face with a look so wild and eager, that La Masque laid her hand lightly and soothingly on her shoulder.

"Don't look at me with such a spectral face! What is there so extraordinary in all I have said?"

"You said you knew my father and mother."

"No such thing! I said I knew they were dead, but the other fact is true also; I did know them when living."

"Madame, who are you? Who were they?"

"Me! Oh, I am La Masque, the sorceress, and they—oh—they were Leoline's father and mother!" and again La Masque slightly laughed.

"You mock me, madame!" cried Leoline, passionately. "You are cruel—you are heartless! If you know anything, in Heaven's name tell me—if not, go and leave me in peace!"

"Thank you! I shall do that presently; and as to the other—of course I shall tell you; what else do you suppose I have come for to-night! Look here! Do you see this?"

She drew out from some hidden pocket in her dress a small and beautifully wrought casket of ivory and silver, with straps and clasps of silver, and a tiny key of the same.

"Well!" asked Leoline, looking from it to her, with the blank air of one utterly at a loss.

"In this casket, my dear, there is a roll of papers, closely written, which you are to read as soon as I leave you. Those papers contain your whole history—do you understand?"

She was looking so white and staring so hard and so hopelessly, that there was no need of the question. She took the casket and gazed at it with a bewildered air.

"My child, have your thoughts gone wool-gathering? Do you not comprehend what I have said to you? Your whole history is hid in that box?"

"I know," said Leoline, slowly, and with her eyes again riveted to the black mask. "But, madame, who are you?"

"Have I not told you? What a pretty inquisitor it is! I am La Masque—your friend, now; something more soon, as you will see when you read what I have spoken of. Do not ask me how I have come by it—you will read all about it there. I do not know that I would give it to you to-night, but I have a strange foreboding that it is destined to be my last on earth. And, Leoline, my child, before I leave you, let me hear you say you will not hate me when you read what is there."

"What have you done to me? Why should I hate you?"

"Ah! you will find that all out soon enough. Do content me, Leoline—let me hear you say: 'La Masque, whatever you have done to me, however you have wronged me, I will forgive you! Can you say that?'"

Leoline repeated it simply, like a little child. La Masque took her hand, held it between both her own, leaned over and looked earnestly in her face.

"My little Leoline! my beautiful rosebud! May God bless you and grant you a long and happy life with—shall I say it, L.oline?"

"Please—no!" whispered Leoline, shyly.

La Masque softly patted the little tremulous hand.

"We are both saying the name now in our hearts, my dear, so it is little matter whether our lips repeat it or not. He is worthy of you, Leoline, and your life will be a happy one by his side; but there is another." She paused and lowered her voice. "When have you seen Count L'Estrange?"

"Not since yesterday, madame."

"Beware of him! Do you know who he is, Leoline?"

"I know nothing of him but his name."

"Then do not seek to know," said La Masque, emphatically. "For it is a secret you would tremble to hear. And now I must leave you—come with me to the door, and fasten it as soon as I go out, lest you should forget it altogether."

Leoline, with a sort of dazed bewilderment, thrust the precious little casket into the bosom of her dress, and taking up the lamp, preceded her visitor down stairs. At the door they paused, and La Masque, with her hand on her arm, repeated, in a low, earnest voice:

"Leoline, beware of Count L'Estrange, and become Lady Kingsley as soon as you can!"

"I will bear that name to-morrow!" thought Leoline, with a glad little thrill at her heart, as La Masque flitted out into the moonlight. And she closed and locked the door, driving the bolts into their sockets, and making all secure.



"Then I'll recall that promise. I have changed my mind."

"Well, that's not very astonishing; it is but the privilege of your sex! Nevertheless, I'm afraid I must insist on your becoming Countess L'Estrange, and that immediately!"

"Never, sir! I will die first!"

"Oh, no! We could not spare such a bright little beauty out of this ugly world! You will live, and live for me!"

"Sir!" cried Leoline, white with passion, and her black eyes blazing with a fire that would have killed him, could fiery glances slay. "I do not know how you have entered here; but I do know, if you are a gentleman, you will leave me instantly! Go, sir! I never wish to see you again!"

"But when I wish to see you so much, my darling Leoline," said the count, with provoking indifference, "what does a little reluctance on your part signify? Get your hood and mantle, my love—my horse awaits us without—and let us fly where neither plague nor mortal man will interrupt our nuptials!"

"Will no one take this man away?" she cried, looking helplessly round, and wringing her hands.

"Certainly not, my dear—not even Sir Norman Kingsley! George, I am afraid this pretty little vixen will not go peaceably; you had better come in!"

With a smile on his face, he took a step toward her. Shrieking wildly, she darted across the room, and made for the door just as somebody else was entering it. The next instant a shawl was thrown over her head, her cries smothered in it, and she was lifted in a pair of strong arms, carried down-stairs, and out into the night.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE THIRD VISION.

PRESENTMENTS are strange things. From the first moment Sir Norman entered the city, and his thoughts had been able to leave Miranda and find themselves wholly on Leoline, a heavy foreboding of evil to her had oppressed him. Some danger, he was sure, had befallen her during his absence—how could it be otherwise with the Earl of Rochester and Count L'Estrange both on her track? Perhaps, by this time, one or other had found her, and alone and unaided she had been an easy victim, and was now borne beyond his reach forever. The thought goaded him, and his horse almost to distraction; for the moment it struck him, he struck spurs into his horse, making that unoffending animal jump spasmodically, like one of those prancing steeds Miss Bonheur is fond of depicting. Through the streets he flew at a frantic rate, growing more excited and full of apprehension the nearer he came to old London Bridge; and calling himself a select livery of hard names inwardly, for having left the dear little thing at all.

"If I find her safe and well," thought Sir Norman, emphatically, "nothing short of an earthquake or dying of the plague will ever induce me to leave her again, until she is Lady Kingsley, and in the old manor at Devonshire. What a fool, and idiot, and nunny I must have been to have left her as I did, knowing those two sleuth-hounds were in full chase! What are all the Mirandas and midnight queens to me, if Leoline is lost!"

That last question was addressed to the elements in general; and as they disclaimed reply, he cantered on furiously, till the old house by the river was reached. It was the third time that night he had paused to contemplate it, and each time with very different feelings; first, from simple curiosity; second, in an ecstasy of delight, and third and last, in an agony of apprehension. All around was peaceful and still; moon and stars sailed serenely through a sky of silver and snow; a faint cool breeze floated up from the river and fanned his hot and fevered forehead; the whole city lay wrapped in stillness, as profound and deathlike as the faded one of the marble prince in the Eastern tale—nothing living moved abroad but the lonely night-guard keeping their dreary vigils before the plague-stricken houses, and the ever-present, ever-busy post-cart, with its mournful bell and dreadful cry. As far as Sir Norman could see, no other human being but himself and the solitary watchman, so often mentioned, were visible. Even he could scarcely be said to be present; for, though leaning against the house with his halbert on his shoulder, he was sound asleep at his post, and far away in the land of dreams. It was the second night of his watch; and with a good conscience and a sound digestion, there is no earthly anguish short of the toothache strong enough to keep a man awake two nights in succession. So sound were his balmy slumbers in his airy chamber that not even the loud clatter of Sir Norman's horse's hoofs proved strong enough to arouse him; and that young gentleman, after glancing at him, made up his mind to try to find out for himself before arousing him to seek information. Securing his horse, he looked up at the house with wistful earnest eyes, and saw that the solitary light still burned in her chamber. It struck him now how very imprudent it was to keep that lamp burning; for if Count L'Estrange saw it, it was all up with Leoline—and there was even more to be dreaded from him than from the earl. How was he to find out whether that illuminated chamber had a tenant or not? Certainly, standing there staring till doomsday would not do it; and there seemed but two ways, that of entering the house at once, or arousing the man. But the man was sleeping so soundly that it seemed a pity to awake him for a trifle; and, after all, there could be no great harm or indiscretion in his entering to see if his bride was safe. Probably Leoline was asleep, and would know nothing about it; or, even were she wide awake, and watchful, she was altogether too sensible a girl to be displeased at his anxiety about her. If she were still awake, and waiting for day-dawn, he resolved to stay with her and keep her from feeling lonesome until that time came—if she were asleep, he would steal out softly again, and keep guard at her door until morning. Full of these praiseworthy resolutions, he tried the handle of the door, half expecting to find it locked, and himself obliged to perpetrate an entrance through the window; but no, it yielded to his touch and he went in. Hall and staircase were intensely dark, but he knew his way without a pilot this time, and steered clear of all shoals and quicksands, through the hall and up the stairs. The door of the lighted room—Leoline's room—lay wide open, and he paused on the threshold to reconnoiter. He had gone softly for fear of startling her, and now, with the same tender caution, he glanced round the room. The lamp burned on the dainty dressing-table, where undisturbed lay jewels, perfume-bottles, sprunking-glass and mirror. The eithern lay unmolested on the couch, the rich curtains were drawn; everything was as he had left it last—everything but the pretty pink figure, with drooping eyes, and pearls in the waves of her rich black hair. He looked round for the things she had worn, hoping she had taken them off and retired to rest, but they were not to be seen; and with a cold

sinking of the heart, he went noiselessly across the room, and to the bed. It was empty, and showed no trace of having been otherwise since he and the pest-cart driver had borne from the apparently lifeless form of Leoline. Yes, she was gone; and Sir Norman turned for a moment so sick with utter dread that he leaned against one of the tall carved posts, and hated himself for having left her with a heartlessness that his worst enemy could not have surpassed. Then aroused into new and spasmodic energy by the exigency of the case, he seized the lamp, and going out to the hall, made the house ring from basement to attic with her name. No reply but that hollow, melancholy echo that sounds so lugubriously through empty houses, was returned; and he jumped down-stairs with an impetuous rush, flinging back every door in the hall below with a crash, and flying wildly from room to room. In solemn, grim repose lay; but none of them held the bright figure in rose-satin he sought. And he left them in despair, and went back to her chamber again. "Leoline! Leoline! Leoline!" he called, while he rushed impetuously up-stairs, and down-stairs, and in my lady's chamber; but Leoline answered not—perhaps never would answer more! Even "hoping against hope," he had to give up the chase at last—no Leoline did that house hold; and with this conviction despairingly impressed on his mind, Sir Norman Kingsley covered his face with his hands, and uttered a dismal groan. Yet, forlorn as was the case, he groaned but once, "only that and nothing more;" there was no time for such small luxuries as groaning and tearing his hair, and boiling over with wrath and vengeance against the human race generally, and those two diabolical specimens of it, the Earl of Rochester and Count L'Estrange, particularly. He plunged head foremost down-stairs, and out of the door. There he was impetuously brought up all standing; for somebody stood before it, gazing up at the gloomy front with as much earnestness as he had done himself, and against this individual he rushed recklessly with a shock that nearly sent the pair of them over into the kennel.

"*Sacré-à-re!*" cried a shrill voice, in tones of indignant remonstrance. "What do you mean, monsieur! Are you drunk, or crazy, that you come running head foremost into peaceable citizens, and throwing them heels upmost on the king's highway! Stand off, sir! and think yourself lucky that I don't run you through with my dirk for such an insult!"

At the first sound of the outraged treble tones, Sir Norman had started back, and glared upon the speaker with much the same expression of countenance as an incensed tiger. The orator of the spirited address had stooped to pick up his plumed cap, and recover his center of gravity, which was considerably knocked out of place by the unexpected collision, and held forth with very flashing eyes, and altogether too angry to recognize his auditor. Sir Norman waited until he had done, and then springing at him, grabbed him by the collar.

"You young hound!" he exclaimed, fairly lifting him off his feet with one hand, and shaking him as if he would have wriggled him out of hose and doublet. "You infernal young jackanapes! I'll run you through in less than two minutes, if you don't tell me where you have taken her!"

The astonishment, not to say consternation, of Master Hubert—for that small young gentleman and no other it was—on having his ideas thus shaken out of him, was unbounded, and held him perfectly speechless, while Sir Norman glared at and shook him in a way that would have instantaneously killed him if his looks were lightning. The boy had recognized his aggressor, and after his first galvanic shock, struggled like a little hero to free himself, and at length succeeded by an artful piling.

"Sir Norman Kingsley," he cried, keeping a safe yard or two of pavement between him and that infuriated young knight, "have you gone mad, or what, in Heaven's name, is the meaning of all this?"

"It means," exclaimed Sir Norman, drawing his sword, and flourishing it within an inch of the boy's curly head, "that you'll be a dead prey in less than half a minute, without you tell me immediately where she has been taken to."

"Where who has been taken to?" inquired Hubert, opening his bright and indignant black eyes in a way that reminded Sir Norman forcibly of Leoline. "Pardon, monsieur, I don't understand at all."

"You young villain! Do you mean to stand up there and tell me to my face that you have not searched for her, and found her, and have carried her off?"

"Why, do you mean the lady we were talking of, that was saved from the river?" asked Hubert, a new light dawning upon him.

"Do I mean the lady we were talking of?" repeated Sir Norman, with another furious flourish of his sword. "Yes, I do mean the lady we were talking of; and what's more—I mean to pin you where you stand, against that wall, unless you tell me, instantly, where she has been taken."

"Monsieur!" exclaimed the boy, raising his hand with an earnestness there was no mistaking. "I do assure you, upon my honor, that I know nothing of the lady whatever; that I have not found her; that I have never set eyes on her since the earl saved her from the river."

The earnest tone of truth, would, in itself, almost have convinced Sir Norman, but it was not that, that made him drop his sword and wilt so suddenly down. The pale, startled face; the dark, solemn eyes, were so exactly Leoline's that they thrilled him through and through, and almost made him believe, for a moment, he was talking to Leoline herself.

"Are you—are you sure you are not Leoline?" he inquired, almost convinced, for an instant, by the marvelous resemblance, that it was really so.

"Me? Positively, Sir Norman, I cannot understand this at all, unless you wish to enjoy yourself at my expense."

"Look here, Master Hubert!" said Sir Norman, with a sudden change of look and tone. "If you do not understand, I shall just tell you, in a word or two, how matters are, and then leave you to clear yourself. You know the lady we were talking about, that Lord Rochester picked up afloat, and sent you in search of?"

"Yes—yes."

"Well," went on Sir Norman, with a sort of grim stoicism. "After leaving you, I started on a little expedition of my own, two miles from the city, from which expedition I returned ten minutes ago. When I left the lady was secure and safe in this house; when I came back she was gone. You were in search of her—had told me yourself you were determined on finding her, and having her carried off; and now, my youthful friend, put this and that together, with a momentary returning glare, 'and see what it amounts to!'"

"It amounts to this!" retorted his youthful friend, stoutly; "that I know nothing whatever about it. You may make out a case of strong circumstantial evidence against me; but if the

lady has been carried off, I have had no hand in it."

Again Sir Norman was staggered by the frank, bold gaze and truthful voice, but still the string was in a tangle somewhere.

"And where have you been ever since?" he began, severely, and with the air of a lawyer about to go into rigid cross-examination.

"Searching for her," was the prompt reply.

"Where?"

"Through the streets; in the pest-houses, and at the plague-pit."

"How did you find out she lived here?"

"I did not find it out. When I became convinced she was in none of the places I have mentioned, I gave up the search in despair, for to-night, and was returning to his lordship to report my ill success."

"Why then, were you standing in front of her house, gazing at it with all the eyes in your head, as if it were the eighth wonder of the world?"

"Monsieur has not the most courteous way of asking questions that I ever heard of; but I have no particular objection to answer him. It struck me that, as Mr. Ormiston brought the lady up this way, and as I saw you and he haunting this place so much to-night, I thought her residence was somewhere here, and I paused to look at the house as I went along. In fact, I intended to ask old sleepy-head, over there, for further particulars, before I left the neighborhood, had not you, Sir Norman, run bolt into me, and knocked every idea clean out of my head."

"And you are sure you are not Leoline?" said Sir Norman, suspiciously.

"To the best of my belief, Sir Norman, I am not," replied Hubert, reflectively.

"Well, it is all very strange, and very aggravating," said Sir Norman, sighing and sheathing his sword. "She is gone, at all events; no doubt about that—and if you have not carried her off, somebody else has."

"Perhaps she has gone herself," insinuated Hubert.

"Bah! Gone herself!" said Sir Norman, scornfully. "The idea is beneath contempt! I tell you, Master Fine-feathers, the lady and I were to be married bright and early to-morrow morning, and leave this disgusting city for Devonshire. Do you suppose, then, she would run out in the small hours of the morning, and go prancing about the streets, or eloping with herself?"

"Why, of course, Sir Norman, I can't take it upon myself to answer positively; but, to use the mildest phrase, I must say the lady seems decidedly eccentric, and capable of doing very queer things. I hope, however, you believe me; for I earnestly assure you I never laid eyes on her but that once."

"I believe you," said Sir Norman, with another profound and broken-hearted sigh, "and I'm only too sure she has been abducted by that consummate scoundrel and treacherous villain, Count L'Estrange."

"Count who?" said Hubert, with a quick start, and a look of intense curiosity. "What was the name?"

"L'Estrange—you know him?"

"No," replied Hubert, with a queer, half-musing smile, "no; but I have a notion I have heard the name. Was he a rival of yours?"

"I should think so! He was to have been married to the lady this very night."

"He was, eh? And what stopped the match?"

"She took the plague!" said Sir Norman, strange to say, not at all offended at the boy's familiarity. "And would have been thrown into the plague-pit but for me, and when she recovered she accepted me and cast him off!"

"A quick exchange! The lady's heart must be most flexible, or unusually large, to be able to hold so many at once."

"I never held him," said Sir Norman, frowning; "she was forced into the marriage by her mercenary friends. Oh! if I had him here, wouldn't I make him wish the highwaymen had shot him through the head and done for him, before I would let him go!"

"What is he like—this Count L'Estrange?"

"Like the black-hearted traitor and villain he is!" replied Sir Norman, with more energy than truth; for he had caught but passing glimpses of the count's features, and those showed him they were decidedly prepossessing; and he slinks along like a coward and an abductor as he is, in a slouched hat and shadowy cloak. Oh! if I had him here!" repeated Sir Norman, with vivacity, "wouldn't I—?"

"Yes, of course you would," interposed Hubert, "and serve him right, too! Have you made any inquiries about the matter—for instance, of our friend, sleeping the sleep of the just, across there?"

"No—why?"

"Why, it seems to me, if she's been carried off before he fell asleep, he has probably heard or seen something of it; and I think it would not be a bad plan to step over and inquire."

"Well, we can try," said Sir Norman, with a despairing face; "but I know it will end in disappointment and vexation of spirit, like all the rest!"

With which dismal view of things, he crossed the street side by side with his jaunty young friend. The watchman was still enjoying the balmy, and snoring in short, sharp snorts, when Master Hubert remorselessly caught him by the shoulder, and began a series of shakes and pokes and digs, and "hallos" and "wake ups!" while Sir Norman stood near and contemplated the scene with a pensive eye. At last, after undergoing a severe course of this treatment, the watchman was induced to open his eyes on this mortal life, and transfix the two beholders with an intensely vacant and blank stare.

"Hey?" he inquired, helplessly. "What was you a-saying of, gentlemen? What was it?"

"We weren't a-saying of anything as yet," returned Hubert; "but we mean to, shortly! Are you quite sure you are wide awake?"

"What do you want?" was the cross-question, given by way of answer. "What do you come bothering me for at such a rate, all night, I want to know?"

"Keep civil, friend, we wear swords," said Hubert, touching, with dignity, the hilt of a little dagger he carried; "we only want to ask you a few questions. First, do you see that house over yonder?"

"Oh! I see it," said the man, gruffly, "I'm not blind!"

"Well, who was the last person you saw come out of that house?"

"I don't know who they was!" still more gruffly. "I ain't got the pleasure of their acquaintance!"

"Did you see a young lady come out of it lately?"

"Did I see a young lady?" burst out the watchman, in a high key of aggrieved expostulation. "How many more times this blessed night am I to be asked about that young lady? First and foremost, there comes two young men, which this here is one of them, and they take out the young lady and have her hauled away

in the dea-kart; then comes along another, as wants to know all the particulars, and by the time he gets properly away, somebody else comes and brings her back like a drowned rat. Then all sorts of people goes in and out, till I get tired looking at them, and then fall asleep, and before I've been in that condition above a minute, you two come punching me and waking me up to ask questions about her? I wish that young lady was in Jericho—I do!" said the watchman, with a smothered growl.

"Come, come, my man," said Hubert, slapping him soothingly on the shoulder. "Don't be savage, if you can help it! This gentleman has a gold coin in some of his pockets, I know, and it will fall to you if you keep quiet and answer decently. Tell me how many have been in that house since the young lady was brought back like a drowned rat?"

"How many?" said the man, meditatively, with his eyes fixed on Sir Norman's garments, and he, perceiving that, immediately gave him the promised coin to refresh his memory, which it did with amazing quickness. "How many—ah—let me see; there was the young man that brought her in and left her there, and came out again and went away. By-and-by he came back with another, which I think this as gave me the money is him. After a little they came out, first the other one, then this one, and went off; and the next that went in was a tall woman in black, with a mask on, and right behind her there came two men; the woman in the mask came out after a while; and about ten minutes after, the two men followed, and one of them carried something in his arms, that didn't look unlike a lady with her head in a shawl. Anything wrong, sir?" as Sir Norman gave a violent start and caught Hubert by the arm.

"Nothing! Where did they carry her to? What did they do with her? Go on! go on!"

"Well," said the watchman, eying the speaker curiously. "I'm going to. They went along, down to the river, both of them, and I saw a boat shove off, shortly after, and that something, with its head in a shawl, lying as peaceable as a lamb, with one of the two beside it. That's all—I went asleep about then, till you two were shaking me and waking me up."

Sir Norman and Hubert looked at each other, one between despair and rage, the other with a thoughtful, half-inquiring air, as if he had some secret to tell, and was mentally questioning whether it was safe to do so. On the whole, he seemed to come to the conclusion, that a silent tongue maketh a wise head, and nodding and saying, "Thank you!" to the watchman, he passed his arm through Sir Norman's, and drew him back to the door of Leoline's house.

"There is a light within," he said, looking up at it; "how comes that?"

"I found the lamp burning when I returned, and everything undisturbed. They must have entered noiselessly, and carried her off without a struggle," replied Sir Norman, with a sort of groan.

"Have you searched the house—searched it well?"

"Thoroughly—from top to bottom!"

"It seems to me there ought to be some trace. Will you come back with me and look again?"

"It is no use; but there is nothing else I can do; so come along!"

They entered the house, and Sir Norman led the page directly to Leoline's room, where the light was.

"I left her here when I went away, and here the lamp was burning when I came back; so it must have been from this room she was taken."

Hubert was gazing slowly and critically round, taking note of everything. Something glinted and flashed on the floor, under the mantel, and he went over and picked it up.

"What have you there?" asked Sir Norman, in surprise; for the boy had started so suddenly, and flushed so violently, that it might have astonished any one.

"Only a shoe-buckle—a gentleman's—do you recognize it?"

Though he spoke in his usual careless way, and half-hummed the air of one of Lord Rochester's love songs, he watched him keenly as he examined it. It was a diamond buckle, exquisitely set, and of great beauty and value; but Sir Norman knew nothing of it.

"There are initials upon it—see there!" said Hubert, pointing, and still watching him with the same powerful glance. "The letters C. W. That can't stand for Count L'Estrange."

"Who then can it stand for?" inquired Sir Norman, looking at him fixedly, and with far more penetration than the court page had given him credit for. "I am certain you know."

"I suspect!" said the boy, emphatically, "nothing more; and if it is as I believe, I will bring you news of Leoline before you are two hours older."

"How am I to know you are not deceiving me, and will not betray her into the power of the Earl of Rochester—if, indeed, she be not in his power already?"

"She is not in it, and never will be through me! I feel an odd interest in this matter, and I will be true to you, Sir Norman—though why I should be, I really don't know. I give you my word of honor that I will do what I can to find Leoline, and restore her to you; and I have never yet broken my word of honor to any man," said Hubert, drawing himself up.

"Well, I will trust you, because I cannot do anything better," said Sir Norman, rather dolefully; "but why not let me go with you?"

"No, no! that would never do! I must go alone, and you must trust me implicitly. Give me your hand upon it."

They shook hands silently, went down-stairs, and stood for a moment at the door.

"You'll find me here at any hour between this and morning," said Sir Norman; "farewell now, and God speed you!"

The boy waved his hand in adieu, and started off at a sharp pace. Sir Norman turned in the opposite direction for a short walk, to cool the fever in his blood, and think over all that had happened. As he went slowly along, in the shadow of the houses, he suddenly tripped over something lying in his path, and was nearly precipitated over it. Stooping down to examine the stumbling-block, it proved to be the rigid body of a man, and that man was Ormiston, stark and dead, with his face upturned to the calm night-sky.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 327.)

## Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

## THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN.

THE struggle for the whip pennant has of late become a direct issue between the Chicago and Hartford nines, none of the other clubs being near enough to either to divide the interest in the contest.

The close of the third week's play of the Western tour has brought Hartford nearer to Chicago than the "Dark Blues" have as yet been able to get before, the record leaving the

score of won games at 26 to 24 between them, the Hartford having lost fewer games by 6 to 7, and played fewer by 30 to 33. Each had won three and lost three with each other, the Chicago leading in the total number of runs. The record of the three weeks' play on the tour is as follows:

FIRST WEEK.			
Clubs.	Games Won.	Games Lost.	Total Score.
Chicago vs. Mutual.....	3	0	26 8
St. Louis vs. Athletic.....	3	0	17 5
Boston vs. Cincinnati.....	3	0	30 19
Hartford vs. Louisville.....	2	1	18 12
	11	1	86 44
SECOND WEEK.			
Chicago vs. Athletic.....	3	1	50 26
Boston vs. Louisville.....	2	1	21 13
Hartford vs. Cincinnati.....	2	0	18 8
St. Louis vs. Mutual.....	2	0	15 1
	8	2	104 48
THIRD WEEK.			
Hartford vs. Chicago.....	2	1	12 11
Boston vs. St. Louis.....	2	1	14 16
Louisville vs. Mutual.....	2	1	16 7
Cincinnati vs. Athletic.....	2	1	15 13
	8	3	57 47

On the Eastern tour the score of won games stands at 24 to 24. The close of the third week of the Western tour leaves the West in the van by a total of 42 to 39.

The League pennant record to July 10th inclusive shows the clubs occupying the following relative position:

Clubs.	Games Won.	Games Lost.	Games Drawn.	Games Played.
Chicago.....	8	3	4	15
Hartford.....	8	3	4	15
St. Louis.....	8	3	4	15
Boston.....	8	3	4	15
Louisville.....	8	3	4	15
Mutual.....	8	3	4	15
Athletic.....	8	3	4	15
Cincinnati.....	8	3	4	15
Games lost.....	7	6	12	35
Games drawn.....	0	1	0	1

The column of games played includes the three drawn games.

## BATTING AND FIELDING AVERAGES.

A writer in the Boston Herald in giving the fielding and batting averages of the League nines up to July 8th, makes out the following players as having the smallest average of errors in each club:

Players.	Average of errors.
Eggle.....	0-19
Fisher.....	0-23
Force.....	0-54
BOSTON.	
O'Rourke.....	0-45
Whitney.....	0-57
Geo. Wright.....	0-68
CHICAGO.	
Hines.....	0-26
Peters.....	0-29
Spalding.....	0-32
CINCINNATI.	
Jones.....	0-33
Gould.....	0-62
Snyder.....	0-67
HARTFORD.	
Higham.....	0-28
York.....	0-31
Rensen.....	0-44
LOUISVILLE.	
Hastings.....	0-19
Ryan.....	0-26
Allison.....	0-40
MUTUAL.	
Holdswordth.....	0-24
Booth.....	0-27
Start.....	0-48
ST. LOUIS.	
Pike.....	0-30
Blong.....	0-32
Cuthbert.....	0-38

The players having the largest average of errors of the above clubs are as follows:

Players.	Average of base hits.
Malone.....	3-6
Brown.....	3-6
White.....	1-00
Pearson.....	1-06
Harbridge.....	2-43
Carball.....	1-33
Hicks.....	3-33
Clapp.....	1-30

The three players of each club who stand first, second and third in the average of base-hits are as follows:







## DREAMING AT FOURSORE.

BY EREN K. HENFORD.

She sits in the open doorway,  
While the sun goes down the West,  
With her kerchief folded smoothly  
Across her aged breast.

Her hair is whiter than silver;  
Once brown, and always fair;  
The sunshine falls on its meshes,  
And works its wonders there.

Her cheeks are wrinkled and faded  
Where the roses used to blow;  
Such roses are all too tender  
For old age's frost and snow.

Her hands in her lap are folded  
And her ball has rolled away  
From her knitting-work, and the kitten  
Is ready for reckless play.

Her eyes are afar on the landscape,  
But she sees no living thing;  
She is looking back into her girlhood,  
Into her life's first spring.

And as she looks back to the springtime  
Of a long and useful life,  
She thinks of its lights and shadows;  
Of its doubts, and hopes, and strife.

She thinks, as she sits in the sunshine  
Of this golden afternoon,  
Of the beautiful moonlight evenings,  
Far back in a happy June.

When she used to stand by the gateway,  
And look at the far, white stars,  
And hark for a well-known footstep,  
And the fall of the meadow bars.

And then she thinks of the morning  
When, clad in her bridal white,  
She went from the home of her girlhood,  
Under skies that were strangely bright.

To the pleasant and lowly homestead  
Where a new, sweet life began,  
When they started out on the journey  
Which ends but when life is done.

She thinks of the little children  
That came to their pleasant home,  
And were so much like sunshine  
That she never thought of gloom.

And then there comes o'er the picture  
A shadow which hides the sun,  
And she sees the grave of her youngest;  
The last and the fairest one.

The years roll on with their changes;  
And the children are taller grown,  
When a shadow, worse than all others,  
Falls over the threshold stone.

She stands again by her husband,  
When his bark of life set sail,  
For the land of the great hereafter,  
Beyond this earthly vale.

She hears him say, as she presses  
The last kiss on his brow,  
"We've been happy a long time, darling,  
And I hate to leave you now."

She thinks of the dreary sorrow  
Which wrapped her lone life in,  
When they laid him down in the churchyard,  
Away from all care and sin.

They had worked and toiled together  
For many a pleasant year,  
And without him, life was lonely,  
But God gave her heart good cheer.

She read his Word, and believed it,  
And found sweet solace there,  
And often talked with her husband  
By the means of faith and prayer.

Her children had grown, and their pathways  
Lay all ways, near and far,  
But one, who was most like his father,  
Had kept his mother there.

She loved to look at his features  
When his daily toil was done,  
And think of that far-off season  
When her work of life began.

And of him who had gone before her  
So many years ago,  
To sing the songs of Heaven,  
And know what the angels know.

The sunshine drifted about her  
Like a blessing from the skies,  
And she woke from her sleepless dreaming  
With a start that was half-surprise.

The sleek white kitten had tangled  
Her yarn in an endless coil,  
And curled itself in the sunbeam  
For a rest from its merry toil.

She took up her life and her knitting  
And began where she laid them down,  
While the sunshine wove in her tresses  
Gold threads for the vanished brown.

She looked away toward the churchyard  
Where the grass grew green and tall,  
Which sprang from the seeds that covered  
The one she loved best of all.

And thought ere long they would lay her  
Away 'neath the grass-green sod,  
And two lives be re-united  
For evermore with God.

## The Men of '76.

SERGEANT JASPER,  
The Hero of the Ranks.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

WHILE celebrating the services of the leaders in field and council in the War for Independence, we should not overlook those heroes of the ranks by whose prowess and devotion the cause was sustained and Liberty attained.

Among the "untitled great" must be named Sergeant William Jasper, the Irish grenadier, who first appears in history in an act so daring that all generations will delight to do him honor.

Enlisting in Moultrie's Second South Carolina regiment, he participated with that regiment in the glorious defense of the fort on Sullivan's Island (June 28th, 1776). [See sketch of Moultrie.] Early in the action the heavy fire concentrated upon the fort cut away the flagstaff which bore the State colors—a strip of blue cloth bearing a white crescent in its center—and the flag tumbled forward into the ditch.

All Charleston was out witnessing the terrific battle with the fleet, and, seeing the colors go down, thought it was a sign of Moultrie's surrender. But the apprehension was of brief duration, for soon the flag again floated from the battlements, on a staff extemporized from a sponge-staff. Jasper beholding the loss of the flag, left his gun, sprung through the embrasure, and tearing the colors off the shattered staff bore them back, through the embrasure, into the fort, amid the wild huzzas of his comrades and officers. Fixing the flag to a sponge-staff he sprung upon the parapet, and there sat, holding aloft the colors until a new staff and colors were erected in the parade!

The marvelous daring of this act, when shot and shell were literally showering upon the spot, elicited, as it so well deserved, the warmest commendations of officers and men alike. When it came to the knowledge of Governor Rutledge, he publicly presented the heroic grenadier with his own elegant sword, and offered Jasper a captain's commission. The Governor's sword he accepted and wore with the most honorable pride, but the commission he had to decline, for, being wholly uneducated and unable even to write, he could not assume a captain's duties; so the brave fellow remained to the last only Sergeant Jasper.

Appreciating Jasper's worth, Moultrie soon gave him a kind of roving commission, to scout, spy and skirmish on his own responsibility—with authority to detach from the brigade all the men he needed. He would choose never more than half a dozen fellows as daring and trusty as himself, and, suddenly disappearing from camp, would be heard of no more until

returning with prisoners or valuable information, after several days' exhaustive and tiresome campaigning. In spying out Tory haunts, and in uncovering their designs, he was especially efficient. Lying concealed in swamps and negro huts, and making confederates of the negroes, he would often disconcert Tory schemes—much to their amazement. He entertained for the Tories so hearty a detestation that he would at all times undergo any hardship to circumvent and defeat them. South Carolina was full of these wretches. Lured by British gold, they had enlisted with the enemy, both openly and secretly, purposely to ravage and murder among their own neighbors, and Jasper, with his little squads, was almost incessantly on their track.

For months he was employed in this hazardous service—never failing to report to headquarters at the proper time. Learning that his brother, who had enlisted in the British regular service, was quartered with a detachment of the enemy at their advance post at Ebenezer, he made his way thither. Representing that he was tired of the American service, he was well received by his brother, and was offered service in the British army, which he declined under the plea of remaining neutral for a while. After a three days' stay, and obtaining valuable information, he succeeded in getting out of the enemy's lines and "reported progress" to Moultrie in person.

Again he visited Ebenezer, in company with a comrade, Sergeant Newton, on a spy; again he was well received and given the freedom of the camp. This visit resulted in an adventure which exemplified both his remarkable courage and his innate goodness of heart.

Among the prisoners brought in was a man named Jones, who, having taken the oath of allegiance to the Crown, and enjoyed British "protection," had repented of his bargain and joined the patriots. Being caught with arms in his hands he was liable to be hung for treason. His wife and child followed him into camp and begged most piteously for his life. Jasper and Newton both were greatly moved by the woman's tears, but what could they do to save the husband? The prisoners, eight in number, were sent, under guard, to Savannah—there to be tried and punished.

Learning of this the two sergeants slipped out of camp and started for Savannah, hoping to find some opportunity for an attack and release of the prisoners. The guard was a sergeant, corporal and eight men—ten in all, good soldiers and well armed. It did seem foolhardy for two to attempt their discomfiture; but, despite the odds, Jasper and Newton persisted in their resolve to save the poor woman's husband, even at the peril of their own lives.

Near Savannah is a fine spring at which the escort would probably halt for rest and drink, before entering the town. That was the last hope of the rescuers; so, reaching the spot before the little cavalcade, the two sergeants crept themselves near the spring. Soon the guard came along the highway and halted. The prisoners, escorted by the corporal with four men, approached the spring and sat down, near at hand. While two of the guard remained over them, two others approached the spring, and placing their muskets against trees, proceeded to fill their canteens. The sergeant and his four men had stacked their arms in the road, and stood near awaiting their turn at the spring.

That was the propitious moment. Giving the signal, Jasper and Newton shot down the two guards standing over the prisoners, then instantly sprung forward, and with clubbed muskets knocked the two soldiers at the spring senseless, and before the sergeant was aware of the fact, the two assailants had assailed them as they seized the two muskets of the dead guards, and wresting the muskets from them bounded forward between the troop and the arms stacked in the road. This of course placed the party at their mercy! The prisoners advanced and were released of their wrist-shackles by Newton, while Jasper kept his musket poised to shoot the first soldier daring to move from his tracks. As the prisoners were released, each seized a musket, and in a few moments the cavalcade moved off—the guard now being the captives—toward Parisburg, where they arrived safely next morning.

Considering all the circumstances, this rescue, within sight of Savannah, in a spot much frequented by the enemy, was a signal instance of personal daring and disinterested service, and Jasper and Newton well deserved the praise which this exploit won for them.

Jasper's career had an ending in keeping with his soldier's devotion. When Moultrie's Second South Carolinians returned to Charleston after their defense of Fort Sullivan, and Sir Peter Parker's fleet had wholly disappeared in the offing, Mrs. Bernard Elliot, "one of the finest women of Charleston," presented the regiment with a stand of red and blue silk colors, richly embroidered with her own fair hands, and in the presentation speech adjured the regiment to defend the colors "as long as they can wave in the air of liberty." To which the sturdy Moultrie, for his men, gave a pledge that they should never be dishonored. These colors it was the pride of the bravest young officers to bear, and in redeeming their commander's pledge four gallant spirits perished—Jasper being the fourth.

At the assault on Savannah the Second South Carolinians, led by Lieut.-Col. Laurens, was given the heavy work of assaulting and carrying the Spring Hill redoubt—the most powerful of all the defensive works—defended by Colonel Maitland's splendid grenadiers and dismounted dragoons. The story of that assault we have already given (see sketches of Pinckney and Lincoln). It was an awful contest along the whole line. Men went down before the well-served British artillery in great numbers. But, with a heroism that was sublime, the lines pressed on. The French, under D'Estaing, pierced the works and reached the town, only to be enfiladed by a cross-fire which sent them whirling back, decimated, to the rear. Hunger and Pulaski on the left, along the river, pressed in between the redoubts only to find the way closed against them by the defeat of D'Estaing on the front. But the Spring Hill fort was not to be won. Laurens' brave fellows, with undaunted dash, rushed to the assault, and, though their ranks were rent through and through, the silken colors were planted on the escarpment—alas! only to go down in blood. Lieutenants Bush and Hume, the bearers, were shot on the spot. Lieutenant Gray sprung forward to raise the colors, and he was slain in the effort. Then came Jasper, resolved to prevent the flag from falling into the enemy's hands. He leaped to Gray's side, and, seizing the flag, received his mortal wound. But he saved the standard, and the promise of the colonel was redeemed—the colors were not dishonored! When the retreat sounded, and, still holding his precious charge in his grasp, Jasper was taken from the ditch and borne to the rear, where he was soon visited by the gallant Major Horry. "I have got my furlough, major," he said. "That sword was presented to me by Governor Rutledge for my conduct at Fort Moultrie. Give it to my fa-

ther, and tell him I have worn it with honor. If the old man should weep, tell him his son died in the hope of a better life. Tell Mrs. Elliot that I lost my life supporting the colors which she presented to our regiment. Should you ever see Jones, (the prisoner he had rescued at the spring near Savannah), his wife and son, tell them that Jasper is gone, but that the remembrance of that battle which he fought for them brought a secret joy to his heart when he was breathing his last."

That was the last of the brave Sergeant Jasper.

## Black Eyes and Blue;

OR,

The Peril of Beauty and the Power of Purity.

A TALE OF COUNTRY AND CITY.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT WILL HE DO ABOUT IT?

To return upon our history to Fraser Harold and little dark-eyed Florence whiling away the moonlit June evenings together—dangerous amusement for one of the two! Scarcely a day passed, for four brief, bewitching weeks, but that Fraser contrived, in some way, to talk with, write to, or walk with his new acquaintance. Florence usually asked Mrs. Plimpton to walk with her for an hour in the park, after dusk, and usually her guardian-dragon declined, with the advice that she should go, however, for the air, as she must require it and the exercise to keep up her health. To this the little prisoner would give a meek assent, and stealing over to the shadows of the great trees in the inclosed grounds, would soon be joined by an impatient lover, who had spent a good part of his day in waiting for this hour—or, at least, so he always assured the young creature who welcomed him with such a blush and smile as not even the dusk and shadows could quite conceal.

Fraser's father was not quite so well as he had been; the family lingered in town on his account; and so the very Fates seemed leagued against our run-away by detaining the young Sybarite in her vicinity. Florence had betrayed how romantic and impracticable were her views of life, in coming to New York as she did. It cannot be expected that she should have acted with prudence subsequently. She lived in a dream-world—during those days—as different from the actual one as are the visions of the seventh heaven entertained by the luxurious Moslem, from the true heaven.

Her wildest hopes, her most splendid pictures of life, were to be swiftly realized. The most elegant, noble, fascinating man that ever trod the streets of New York was to marry her. He was fabulously rich; and she was to be decked in silks and jewels and to step into the magic circle of fashion and power.

Her heart was set to run to that tune—"power, wealth, triumph, love—love, triumph, wealth, power!"—and it beat to it most sweetly.

For she was a selfish little thing. Madly in love with Fraser Harold, she was sharp to calculate the advantages of marriage with such a man, and resolved that her beauty should be the magic key to open to her the doors of pleasure and pride.

She would wear diamonds and dresses from Paris; she would have everything on earth her fancy craved; she would have all Fraser's club friends, of whom he talked to her sometimes, admit her beauty—ah! what a flowery path was marked out for her elastic little foot!

And yet—if she had prudently stopped and recalled that fact!—Fraser had never yet said a word to her about marriage. He had made love to her—recklessly enough—but he had committed himself to no promises. In the simple village where she was reared, young men did not make love to young women unless they wished to marry them. She took everything for granted. She only wished that her admirer would be more impulsive and urge her to wed him before Mr. Rhodes' return; as then she would be driven from her present home and have no shelter proper to one of her expectations.

Two or three times she asked Mr. Harold, in her pretty, confiding way, what he thought she ought to do when Mr. Rhodes came back, and he had laughed, with some light assurance that she would be provided for.

So our foolish little beauty lived on air. The great mirrors which rose from floor to ceiling in the grand rooms, where she was free to roam about, as proudly as if they were her own—flattered her unceasingly as she flitted from one to another. They told her that Fraser Harold only spoke the truth when he painted her, in his gay and gallant phrases:

"As one small, lone up  
Or loveliness alone."

Although so small, Florence was exquisitely graceful; the excitement under which she now continually lived, added new glory to the large, deep-fringed eyes lighting up the small, dark face, now bloom to the peachy cheeks, new wistfulness to voice and smile. She was, too, one of those actual devotees at the shrine of the Goddess of Fashion, who catches every murmur of the oracle; and there was not a trick of movement, drapery or manner of the haughty and high-bred woman who flitted by her windows but our rustic belle caught it and made it her own.

A busy month that was to Florence, as well as the most important one of her short life. She had no time for grief. In the morning, after breakfast, she haunted the windows, hovering behind the half-turned slats of the blinds like some houri behind the lattice-work of her courts, until Fraser Harold had passed by on his way down-town.

The one stolen glance which he directed toward the windows was enough for her to live upon until evening; though often, by some prearrangement, he contrived that she should get a little note or a flower in addition. We have said that our heroine had plenty of energy; she was at work, hard, many of those long, hot hours, after she became acquainted with Fraser, cutting, fitting and making for herself half a dozen beautiful dresses. This was work she was not accustomed to; but Mrs. Plimpton refused to bring a dressmaker to the house while her master was away, and Florence would have these rich garments prepared in anticipation of the day when her lover would ask her to go to church with him; and then, from church to his family. She spent all but a hundred dollars on finery—on a wedding *trousseau* before she had been asked to become a bride. At first, Mrs. Plimpton remonstrated with her on her extravagance; but mademoiselle assured her, loftily, that she was going where finer things than those would be required; and as the housekeeper knew little about her mysterious guest and the girl appeared to have plenty of money, she felt that she had no business to interfere, and patiently fulfilled all orders.

When Florence had finished an elegant robe she would put it on, and sweep about the dim

drawing-rooms like a fairy princess, smiling at her own beauty and longing for the time to come when she could wear her pretty things openly for Fraser's admiration, instead of being compelled to steal to him in the shadow and in her plainest garb.

All of a sudden, on the fifth of July, just a month after his departure, Mr. Rhodes returned to his house on Gramercy Park.

Without even a telegram to the housekeeper, he arrived one evening about nine o'clock. He asked for a cup of tea, and when she brought it up to him in the library, and he had hurried over a few questions about her health, the state of the house, and so forth, he added:

"And how about your young visitor, Mrs. Plimpton?—have you had any trouble with her?"

"None at all, sir. She's a bit vain and extravagant, I'm thinking, sir; but an innocent thing, quiet as a lamb."

"Been contented, shut up here alone as it were?"

"She ain't worried or complained a mite, sir. Never spoken to a soul but me, sir, all these weeks; yet she seems cheerful."

"You think, then, she is all right—that her story was not made up for the occasion, Mrs. Plimpton?"

"Oh, she's no bad one, Mr. Rhodes. I'm certain o' that. But what under the sun an' moon she's going to do, beats me. She ain't nowise confidential, sir; and she's made herself beautiful clothes, and says she'll have need of 'em."

"Perhaps she is going back to her father. I have often regretted that I did not answer his advertisement. She pleaded with me not to; yet she is too young to judge for herself. I am afraid I ought not to have listened to her."

"And are you home for the rest of the summer, sir?" inquired the housekeeper, with some curiosity; she had been very impatient to learn what had brought her master back so unexpectedly.

"Oh, no; only for a day or two. I grew tired of Newport, and am on my way to Saratoga. Of course I would not pass through the city without stopping a day to see how you are getting on. Miss Golden need not be frightened away from here just yet. I shall proceed on my way Thursday. The thought of her has worried me a good deal. I think I will urge her to-morrow to tell me her true reasons for fleeing from home, and perhaps advise her what course to pursue. I am glad to hear that you have no great fault to find with her, Mrs. Plimpton. It would have been a mortification to me to have had it turn out that she was the companion of some heart-smasher of a burglar."

"She's no character like that, Mr. Rhodes. I never thought that of her. But I wouldn't have much to say to her, for all that, if I was you, sir," added the shrewd housekeeper, anxious to keep her master out of the fatal range of the womanly artillery of eyes and lips, which the "natural-born flirt"—as she secretly dubbed Florence—would direct at him.

Mr. Rhodes sighed, leaned his head on his hand as if weary, and forgot to drink his second cup of tea.

"Where is she now?" he asked, suddenly looking up.

"Bless me, sir, how you startled me! She's taking a bit of air and exercise inside the park railings, sir."

"At this time of night?"

"Why, it's not late, for a summer evening. The poor child doesn't put her foot out o' doors until after dark. She generally asks me to go with her; but I don't like the night-damp; and it's quite safe in the park, as you know."

"I will just step over and escort her across the street," remarked Mr. Rhodes, rising, entirely forgetful that he might be observed in this act of kindness by some of his neighbors.

However, the most of the houses in the vicinity were closed for the season; he supposed the dwelling of his friends, the Harolds, to have been deserted some time ago; and as he did recall the fact, in going down the steps, that he should not care to be seen escorting a young lady—for whom he could not account—into his mansion, it consoled him to remember that his acquaintances were probably far away.

He went lightly down the steps, across the street, and into the park. The moon was at the full, and shining so brightly in a clear sky that the lamps had not been lighted. The park was deserted, except for a solitary couple pacing slowly up and down a tree-shadowed walk some distance away. Mr. Rhodes peered sharply about at the seats under the trees, expecting soon to discover a little figure nestled on some one of them. He could not have answered had he asked himself why he felt such a strange, gentle pleasure in this quest—why such a warm thrill of benevolent impulse, of desire to cherish and protect this wild, foolish, imprudent, but innocent little creature, run through his usually cool veins, as he walked about in the light and shadow looking for Miss Golden.

Her bright face, framed in its purple hair, and illumined with those glorious eyes, had haunted him so much since he went away, that actually, he would have felt love-sick and disappointed, had he been told, on reaching his threshold, that the pretty stranger had taken flight. Yet he was almost totally unaware of his feelings. He knew now that he took a certain pleasure in coming out to find the lost bird, who, frightened and panting, had beaten its wings against a new cage, seeking shelter, and been admitted.

He made the entire circuit of the park. No one—not a creature—but the couple pacing up and down that leafy avenue. Had Miss Golden seen him, and, alarmed, taken flight against his spirit's snail; his feet lagged. He leaned against the trunk of a tree; for want of something else to do just then he watched the pair walking away down the arcade—a pair of lovers, evidently, for the lady clung tenderly to the gentleman's arm, with face lifted to catch the low words he spoke as he bent his head to murmur in her ear. It was not until they had turned, and walking back, approached within a few feet of him, that a sudden suspicion darted into Redmond Rhodes' mind. They were in deep shadow; but surely he knew that tall, elegant figure, with the haughty, graceful head bent half-condescendingly!—surely that slender little form—Mr. Rhodes stepped quickly out into the center of the path, just as the two emerged from black shadow and advanced under the full splendor of the moon, until, seeing and recognizing him, they started and stopped.

It was not often that Fraser Harold was guilty of the weakness of blushing; but now, as he met the blazing eyes of his neighbor sternly reading his face, a deep purple flush passed over it. Rhodes looked at him until his eyes sunk, and then his contemptuous gaze turned on the girl, who, pale and shrinking, yet clung to her companion's arm, and whose eyes, although frightened and expanding, did not lower, but met his own honestly.

"So! this is the way you abuse my confidence, is it?" he spoke, after a full minute's silence, addressing the girl.

"Is it very wrong, Mr. Rhodes?—I did not mean it to be," she replied, humbly, casting at

him a piteous look, brimming with tears. "I should have told you all the moment I saw you, if you had given me the opportunity."

"I found your little friend in the park, so lonely and sad, that I took it upon me, for your sake, Rhodes, to help her pass the time. No harm done, I hope," added Mr. Harold, with an attempt to laugh down the dark frown on his friend's face.

"I am afraid there is harm done, Fraser; this young girl is under my protection."

"Oh!" sneered Harold, "if you had told me that I should not have interfered."

"What do you mean, Mr. Harold?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Rhodes?"

"I mean that if this young lady is innocent, as she appears to me, I consider it my duty to protect her, as if she were my sister. Understand! I will do it, by Heaven! If you have deceived her, you shall answer to me for it, as one gentleman answers to another. Now you have my meaning."

Fraser was brave, to recklessness, but his debased moral nature justified before the "righteous indignation" that flamed in the face of the man who confronted him. Yet he had not idea of giving up his prey. So infuriated had he become with the arrogant and artlessness of the daring and implicitly, the cunning and childishness combined, of the beautiful girl, that it would now have been the blackest disappointment of his life to have her snatched from under his influence by another.

The two men glared at each other like tigers. Fraser's blush had given place to a marble pallor; his lips were curled so as to show the line of his white teeth—he no longer shrunk from Rhodes' regard, but answered it with a wicked look of bold triumph.

Redmond Rhodes, older, colder, wiser, was quite as fiercely exalted. In that first sharp pang which darted through his breast when he recognized the pair in that lovely attitude, was revealed to him the truth. He, too, was in love with the little adventures!

His rage was prompted by his jealousy; his indignation by his knowledge of his rival's character. A sweet memory of the sweet face from which he had wiped the false wrinkles had haunted him in his journeyings and brought him home, to find those bright eyes shining, those curved lashes drooping under the love-look of another. And that other, his friend—but a friend who could not be trusted in his affairs with women.

If Redmond had made up his mind to become the wooer of the unprotected beauty, he would have approached her with all the more delicacy and reverence on account of her position; but he knew that this was not the style of Fraser Harold.

He was terribly jealous. Having been calm and restrained all these years, it was as if a long-extinct volcano had suddenly flamed forth in fire and molten torrents. He had gone away, and in his absence, Fraser, the insolent, the graceful, the selfish, the all-conquering, had stolen into the company of the simple little girl, and wiled her very heart out at her melting eyes. The thought made him furious. It was with difficulty he refrained from drawing his revolver and shooting the traitor before her eyes.

Quick to read the signs of men's favor, Florence divined instantly that Mr. Rhodes was more interested in her, than in defending woman on principle, and she would have thrilled with delight at this new evidence of her power, had she not also thrilled with fear at the danger to her lover—for she read as quickly the danger in waiting. So Rhodes, frowning darkly, eyed Harold, who sneered finely.

Presently Mr. Rhodes turned to the pale, wide-eyed little thing—the bone of contention between two enraged natures—and said, with a strong effort to appear composed:

"I do not know what has passed between you and this gentleman; but I do know that he is a dangerous friend for you; and I warn you never to speak to him again. I want you to promise me that you will break off the acquaintance here and forever."

"Oh, Mr. Rhodes, I cannot do that. I love him, and he loves me—he has told me so a thousand times—and I believe him!" and she darted a trusting smile and glance at her avowed lover.

"Has he asked you to marry him? Has he introduced you to his parents and sisters?"

"You have asked me to marry you, have you not, Fraser?" she asked, turning and laying her tiny hand on his. "Or, if you have not—in so many words—" she stammered, as she suddenly recalled the fact that never in all his passionate love-talk had he once mentioned the subject of marriage—"it is understood, is it not? Of course I expect to marry him, and soon," she said, with the air of a princess. "I am making my wedding-dresses, now—for I know Fraser would not wish me to be dependent—oh, Fraser, why do you not speak, and tell Mr. Rhodes how you love me, and intend me to be your dear little wife, right away?" she suddenly broke forth, looking up with an expression of mingled reproach and confidence that would have melted a very selfish heart into an honest resolution.

The man of pleasure hesitated. He had grown wonderfully fond of this silly little country girl—but it was opposed to every habit and idea of his, the thought of tying himself to a wife, even were she the daughter of all the ancient Knickerbockers. So he stammered, as he looked down into her loving eyes:

"You know, Florrie, my sweet, that I would never harm you. I would be just as careful of you and your good name as this man, who is trying to make trouble between us."

"Oh!" moaned Florence, wringing her hands, "I wish it were not so late—or that I knew one soul in this great city beside—I would go away this minute from you two men, and neither of you should ever see me again. Fraser, you swore to me that you loved me."

"I do, my girl—I love you to distraction."

"Very well," interrupted Rhodes, struggling to speak calmly—"and you love him?"

"As my life!"

"Then, allow me to make a suggestion to you, sir. It is not too late to find our mutual friend, the Rev. Mr. Brown, in his parlors. He will unite you to this lady without delay. I will accompany you to the rectory and give the bride away. Situated as she is, if you have a spark of sensibility, Fraser Harold, you will marry her to-night."

The white fingers of the moonlight painted the three faces even more pallid than they had become through emotion. That of the last speaker glowed with the dignity of his feelings; in that moment of manly defense of helpless beauty he looked so grand, so more than any merely young and handsome man can look, that Florence, panting, distressed as she was, even in the very instant of suspense, stole at him a look of admiration and gratitude.

Fraser, as if ashamed to have the pure moon read his face, shrunk a little into the shadow, and when the girl to whom he had been making passionate love for a month, turned again, timidly stretching out her little hands toward him with a touching gesture of faith,



he half averted it from the eager glance of the great, soft eyes. The two others waited so long for his answer it seemed to them he had determined not to give it.

#### CHAPTER XII. A NEW DANGER.

AMONG the frequenters of the gambling table at a certain German Spa, in the season of 1870, none attracted such universal attention as a certain American gentleman known then as Mr. Goldenough. It was not that he played with a dare-devil recklessness—nor even that he had a marvelous run of luck which continued week after week and made him the envy of the old play-eaters who lived on the feverish drug of a morbid excitement—but that he was generally accompanied by his daughter—a young creature, scarcely seventeen, whose rare and delicate beauty, of a type to set saving the coldest critics of woman's loveliness, was enhanced by her evident utter indifference to it, and the sweetly-sad expression of a pair of blue eyes whose purity was like that of the deep Alpine lakes which mirror nothing but the heaven above them.

Tall and slender; with hair, like the ripple of sun-burned waves, coming low and thick over a smooth white forehead, there was a freshness perfectly exquisite in the pure pink and white of her complexion—a charm, of itself, seldom seen except in her own land; while the short upper lip and the full under one, gave just enough promise of tenderness and warmth to soften the cold beauty of her other features. She was always dressed with plain elegance—no more coquetry in her attire than in her manner; always accompanied the pompous, handsome father who spent hours of every afternoon and evening at the magic tables; always waited with the same air of pensive indifference. Counts and dukes, barons and gay young bloods might stare at her by the hour; the only sign of consciousness of their observation she ever gave was to draw down her veil if any one's stare became insolent. So afraid of this loss to their feasting eyes did the lovers of beauty become, that they were extremely careful not to appear to be studying that fair countenance; and if some conceited fop, by too rude or prolonged a gaze, was the cause of the veil's coming down, he was frowned at as a common nuisance by the others. Young German artists, with wild, long hair and unkempt beards, would conceal their sketch-books behind the players, and steal the likeness of that loveliest face to reproduce it a thousand times afterward in their pictures. It came to be a question addressed to all new-comers—“Have you seen *la belle Americaine*?”

Men, high in the world of power and fashion, sought the acquaintance of the American banker and made themselves agreeable to him. He was genial and reciprocal; but he seldom introduced his daughter. To Violet, this life she was leading with this new-found father of hers was strange as any page out of a book of fiction. She never could fully realize that it was herself who went through the quiet part, day after day, marked out for her by her manager; still less could she realize that this manager was her father, or that either was the sober deacon of the little Lycurgus church, the great man of the small New England village, toward whom, all her young life, she had felt a certain awe tempered by vague distrust.

On that afternoon when she had been accosted by Mr. Goldenough on the road, near the bridge, and he begged her, importantly, to ride with him a little while he could give her some messages for her mother, which he did not care to deliver personally, it was not until several miles had been passed over and her companion began to urge his horse to its utmost speed, that she realized his plan of abduction. She entreated him not to visit upon her his anger at others; but he reproached her as bitterly as unjustly of being the cause of his dear Floy's being driven to the rash step she had taken, and swore a terrible oath that her friends should never hear of her until his own darling was found. He explained to her his rights, as her father; made her believe that no complaints of hers would be listened to by strangers or officials, when told that he was her legal guardian; painted to her timid mind the uselessness and unpleasantness of public scenes, and had her so intimidated by the time they reached a distant town at nine that evening, that she never made a word of complaint to the people about her, but drank the cup of tea he procured for her at the railroad station, and entered the car, a little later, as he ordered her to do. It is probable that he got some person, by paying him, to mail his letter—which he had prepared beforehand—to Madame D'Eglantine, on a train going in the opposite direction and at some point south of Lycurgus. Certain it is, he and his unwilling companion went aboard a northern-bound train, and in due time reached Portland, where, after making a few necessary purchases for his daughter, he hurried her on board a vessel about to sail for Nova Scotia, and only delaying to weigh anchor until their arrival on board. Poor Violet's heart shrunk with dread from this man, who seemed capable of anything, now that the sheepskin, in which he had so long masqueraded, had fallen from his shoulders.

She resolved, when they reached the port where they were to disembark and take the first New York steamer calling on its way to Liverpool, to run away and throw herself on the protection of strangers. But she had no money and no courage to place herself in so forlorn a condition, and, as Mr. Goldenough had assured her he should return to her mother as soon as certain negotiations pending between them were ended, she concluded to submit silently to his plans. He compelled her to assume the dress of an English servant-girl, and himself was clothed like a rough farmer—they took second-cabin tickets, and her father told her, on the second day out, that there was not a person on the steamer who knew him.

Arrived in London rooms were taken in a retired inn in an old-fashioned part of the city; and here she was told to resume suitable attire, and was taken to a ladies' furnishing shop where liberal orders were given for a complete outfit suitable for a young lady about to travel on the continent.

They had then crossed the channel and gone immediately to this German Spa, where letters were already awaiting Mr. Goldenough, as he now gave his name. Here he took very handsome rooms in a private hotel, and told Violet, curiously, that she had nothing to do but see the world and enjoy herself. They had not been settled in their new quarters twenty-four hours before Mr. Goldenough began to haunt the roulette tables. He had nothing else to do. All the associations of his life were broken up—he was devoted to his craving restlessness; he began to play, had unusual good fortune, and became in-

fatuated. It was just the medicine to a mind diseased as was his. For two or three hours each afternoon, and from eight to eleven each evening he was at his post, choosing his numbers and waiting the turn of the devilish little instrument with utter apparent coolness, no matter how large the risks. By one of those curious freaks of chance, such as sometimes gives the thirteen trumps to a whist-player, he was almost invariably a winner—until the proprietor of the establishment began to entertain secret thoughts of having him quietly assassinated, to prevent the breaking of the house.

Of course he felt, and knew, that his extraordinary luck must turn sometime to disaster. Within his own mind he resolved that at the first signs of a change, he would quit, not only the tables, but the town. A resolve about as wise as when one ventures into a quicksand with the resolution that when he is drawn in up to the knees he will begin to retreat.

Monsieur Goldenough never left his hotel to visit the gambling halls, or drive, or promenade, without compelling his daughter to attend him. He was constantly fearful that she might make the attempt to leave him. Even at night he kept the key of her sleeping-room, which opened on the corridors. Yet he might have allowed her more liberty—might have spared her, at least, the, to her, terribly disagreeable task of haunting the halls of Baden. For he never allowed her any money, although dressing her beautifully and giving her fine apartments—and Violet was too shrinking to attempt to dispose of her jewelry, or to venture a flight through a foreign country and over the Atlantic, had she thus procured the means of paying her way.

No wonder the melancholy which settled down upon her young spirits cast a cloud over her fair, pure, delicate face. The cause of that melancholy was the subject of much earnest discussion among the young snobs who made it a pious duty to devote a part of each day to worship at her shrine. *La belle Americaine* was rich and an only child, apparently—very devoted to her father, for was she not constantly with him? Such an instance of affection between parent and child was as rare as it was admirable!

Had she really lost her mother? No, for she was not in mourning. Was it then, an *affaire de cœur*? Had the adorable young divinity fallen indiscreetly in love with some youth, whose purse, or whose genealogical record was not long enough, and had her father brought her across the water to allow the tender impression to become obliterated by newer ones? So they chattered about our modest Violet—stared at her—fell in love with her, each after his way.

It was a situation which *Florence* would have keenly enjoyed; but to Violet it was torture as keen. More than once, in those public places, the tears rushed into her eyes, and hung glittering on the long, down-bent lashes until they dried of themselves, for she dared not lift a hand to wipe them away.

If, by chance, M. Goldenough, pointing with his little stick to the numbers he considered lucky, and waiting the turn of the wheel, raised his eyes to his daughter's patient face and saw it pale, or the mist gathering in her large blue eyes, a fiendish joy swelled in his heart. For he hated her! Hated her, because she had lived, in spite of him, and been the unconscious means of thwarting his plans for the only human being he had ever really loved—his other, favorite daughter.

The only real pleasure he had, away from the gaming-table, was in thoughts of the agony he had inflicted on the woman whom in youth he had so cruelly wronged; and in watching the “sadness and longing” creep over the face of the young creature whom he had chained to him.

To some natures, to wrong another is also to excite hatred of the one injured. It was so with this man. The trusting girl whom he had made his wife, only to heartlessly disown and desert when he found her claims to enormous wealth denied, had fought her way to triumph and success—for her child's sake—over a path of fire which would have blasted and killed any but a most heroic woman; and now he burned to be revenged on her that she had dared to live and struggle. He had formed a dastardly plan to strike so that the wound would hurt the most surely. She had said that at last she was independent of him, and in return he had robbed her of her child.

Beyond this brutal revenge he had also the purpose to benefit his own daughter. He could not endure to think that Violet would be heirless to estates that would rank with those of the richest nobles of France, and his *Florence* live on the rag-ends of the small fortune not any too great for his own uses. He considered it a good joke to compel Madame D'Eglantine to contribute to the aggrandizement of his pet. If he could wring from her a noble sum for *Florence* to enjoy, there would be a spice of delight about the spending of that money which only an epicure in wickedness could fully relish.

He had letters from his agent, Blank, from time to time, giving reports of the progress of affairs in New York. On the day after the sailing of the *Germania* he received a cable dispatch, in cipher, informing him of the two passengers who had so quickly made up their minds to depart on that steamer.

Well! the season at the Spa was about closing. He had thirty thousand dollars in gold money than when he set his foot on foreign soil; and had lived well all the time. He was quite ready for a move. He made his preparations for a trip up the Nile.

“Give me a week the start, and madame will have a fine time pursuing us!” he laughed to himself. “And if she overtakes us—what then? I shall demand my daughter before I give up hers! The game is in my own hands. I will have some amusement at madame's expense, and receive twenty thousand pounds from her as a gift to my pet!”

“I need not leave Baden-Baden for six days yet,” he continued to muse. “In that time I must make the magic wheel turn a few times more for my benefit. And, by George, it will be a joke worth playing to marry this lily-faced daughter of mine to that old scamp of an English Jew baronet who asked me yesterday if he might pay his addresses to her! I'll invite him to join us on our excursion to Egypt; 'twill make it so pleasant for Miss Violet—ha! ha! ha!”

It would seem as if, the lid of hypocrisy which had so long covered the seething caldron of Goldenough's mind having been removed, all the hell-broth of the witches of the heath was steaming up out of it.

It is not strange that Violet, inexperienced in reading human nature, but quick-witted and observant, shrunk more and more into herself, and continually suffered from a shuddering dread and distrust of this companion—this unloved father, the very echo of whose voice shook her soul with intangible terrors to which she could give no shape.

Those terrors were fated to take shape quickly enough.

On the evening after reading the cable dispatch Mr. Goldenough did not have his usual luck—he ventured more and more, losing every

time, much to the amusement and excitement of the spectators who had so long been interested in his wonderful good fortune. The news that the American was losing drew a crowd to watch his movements.

At length, when M. Goldenough had lost a twentieth part of his previous winnings, Sir Israel Benjamin laid his hand on his arm, in trepidation at seeing so much of the gold, which he already counted as his own, disappear out of his future.

“Come away, my friend,” he whispered, eagerly.

“It is early,” responded the player, indifferently.

“You have forgotten your engagement with me,” persisted the baronet, aloud.

“Oh! if I have an engagement, that is a different thing!” said Mr. Goldenough, reluctantly rising; and he, his daughter, and the English baron walked away, followed by dozens of pairs of eyes and piteous comments, among the latter the most frequent being:

“He will marry *la belle Americaine* to that old ruse!”

(To be continued—commenced in No. 330.)

#### TOO LATE.

BY SERGT. LACY.

Shuts down the night with a tempest rack  
Dense and dark as a funeral pall,  
While over the ocean's midnight black  
The fends of the tempest rear and call.

Frantic in their furious might  
The living waters writhe and roar;  
Crowned with foam and ghastly light,  
They spend their fury on the shore.

Now, rushing on with frenzied gloe  
To burst the barriers of their lair,  
Then baffled, slink back to the sea  
In sheets of phosphorescent glare.

Hark! Over the wild, tormented waste  
Shrieks and howls increase the din;  
The anguish of ocean's dead unchaste  
That life engulfs its depths within.

Oh, storm-clad night! This wild, weird hour  
Of ravening billows and tempest clouds  
Is rivalled by a wilder power  
Whose sable pall my heart enshrouds.

O'er my memory fly the years  
That lie between my youth and now,  
Those jeweled hopes unknown to fears  
Of well won wreaths to crown my brow.

As well with folded hands sit still,  
At the world like a clown to gaze and gaze,  
As own the wasted hours that fill  
The measure of my life's fruitless days.

Too late for laurels! too late for fame!  
Too late to see the dawn of fate!  
Too late to carve on the heights a name,  
Mocks the blast—too late! too late!

#### OLD DAN RACKBACK, The Great Exterminator: OR, THE TRIANGLE'S LAST TRAIL!

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF “HAPPY HARRY,” “IDAHOM,”  
“DAKOTA DAN,” “OLD HURRICANE,”  
“HAWKEYE HARRY,” ETC., ETC.

#### CHAPTER XXXII.

##### ANTELOPE ARTH'S REVELATION.

THE report of the rifle and the simultaneous fall of Christie Dorne into the arms of her young friend, Amy Loomis, led to one conclusion—Christie had been shot! Her brother ran to the tent and lifted her in his arms, calling her name in tones of distress; but there was no response.

“Major, my sister has been killed—assassinated by some lurking fiend!”

“I see no wound, Herbert,” said the bluff old major, who, assisted by Amy, examined the unconscious girl.

Meanwhile, a number of the rangers had hurried away in the direction from whence the rifle report came; and before Christie's friends had discovered the fact, one of them came back with the report that the shot had been fired by one of the guards at a skulking wolf, and not at the maiden.

“She has fainted away, Herbert,” said Amy, excitedly. “She has been very nervous and excited all the evening.”

“Yes, yes,” replied the major, “she must be kept quiet. Her nervous system is completely prostrated by the ordeal through which she has passed. The least excitement brings on a relapse. No doubt the story of Squire Bandy produced this shock. She must be kept quiet, I say, Herbert.”

The major's words were not disregarded, and the greatest silence and caution were observed by the rangers after the maiden had been nursed back to life by her friends. Amy Loomis and Christie's brother remained in the tent with her, and after she had fully recovered her consciousness, Amy went out, leaving the brother and sister alone.

Herbert sat down upon a camp-stool, and resting his elbows upon his knee and his head upon his palms, became deeply absorbed in silent thought. Christie noticed his reflective mood, and she knew by the occasional deep-drawn sighs that he was troubled. Finally she said:

“Herbert, your hunting excursion is turning out to be an excursion of trouble, instead of pleasure.”

“Yes, Christie, it has been one of continual difficulties ever since we left the settlement. I think if the Government troops can't keep the outlaw Indians in their reservation, they had better delegate the authority to the settlers and hunters.”

“The white outlaws are the cause of it, Herbert,” replied Christie.

“I know they are the chief element of all this deviltry. They do the brain work and the Indians the mischief. And I am not certain that we are entertaining angels unawares tonight.”

“To whom do you refer?”

“Those reputed rangers—followers of Idaho Tom,” responded Herbert, watching his sister closely.

“Then you still maintain your hostility toward Tom?” she responded.

“No more than to any other outlaw.”

“Herbert, Tom is no outlaw. This will be proved to you some day,” she said, half bitterly, half pleading.

“Do you still love him, Christie? Will you spurn the affection of a gentleman like Mr. Farwell for the fickle love of such a young scapegrace as Idaho Tom?”

“I do not love Mr. Farwell, Herbert—I cannot love him.”

“Ah, Christie! you still persist in adding disgrace to the once honored name of Dorne,” said the brother, bitterly. “I labored to help hide your shame that you might be comfortably settled in a home of wealth and luxury—such as only Adam Farwell can give. And then I, too, would be restored to my former place among mankind—the place from which poverty brought me down to a level with a poor, plodding frontier settler.”

“Brother!” cried Christie, her eyes flashing with indignation, “your motives are selfish! You would have me wed Farwell for the sake of my money. You care nothing for my happiness so that you accomplish your objects.”

“My lady!” he said, angrily, “I will not put up with this conduct much longer; I will leave you alone in poverty and disgrace.”

“Herbert, I am not in a mood to quarrel,” she said; “my sisterly love forbids it. I have never harbored an evil thought toward you, through all my patient suffering. You are my brother and protector, and I feel that I am bound to respect you as such, when your guardianship does not encroach upon my eternal happiness.”

With a muttered oath upon his lips, the selfish brother left the tent and poor Christie to her bitter thoughts.

During the night the three men who had gone north among the hills, elk-hunting, returned, bringing the news that they had seen a party of outlaws as Indians moving westward through the hills, with a white male prisoner, bound hand and foot upon a horse, in their power. From the description of the prisoner, the horse he bestrode, and the party that had him in custody, there was not a doubt left in the minds of the rangers but that it was their young captain, Idaho Tom.

Dakota Dan was for taking up the trail that night and starting in pursuit, but some opposed him on account of the darkness.

“Tut, tut,” said the old ranger, “do you think the Triangle can't follow a trail in the darkest night that ever hung over year? What's Humility's nose for? What's Patience's ears for? and what's my eyes for? Ay, boys! set man, hoof and howler in motion if ye want to see the Triangle work; git the cogs all to smashin' just right, and I tell ye what we can follow the year-old trail of a steamer across the Atlantic ocean. Boys, I'm anxious to be upon the trail of them varmints. I feel more at home on the trail; besides, boys, I've had a presentiment—a presentiment that I'd soon follow my last trail.”

“Fie, Dan,” said Darcy Cooper, “you're good for several years yet. Never say die as long as you can navigate.”

“I may be, lad, so far as constitution and health is concerned. I hope so, at least; for I hold a purty stiddy nerve yit; my eyes reaches out well, and the rest of the Triangle seems real sprightly. We ought to last a while yit, notwithstandin' my presentiment of somethin' to come. The Rackbacks alers b'lieved in presentiments—runs in the blood, and hits nearly every time. But, boys, if ye all say wait till mornin', why, wait it is.”

Thus the matter rested for the time being. The night wore away, and the dawn ushered in the new day.

Bright and early the camp was astir, for the rangers were to take the trail in pursuit of their young leader, while the hunters were to start on their homeward journey.

Christie Dorne was feeling much better this morning, and walked about camp with a vague, restless look on her face. She had heard the news that the hunters brought in concerning the supposed captivity of Idaho Tom; and although it added anew to her grief, she felt hopeful that the expedition going to his relief under the renowned Dakota Dan would effect his release before injury or harm would befall him.

A few minutes before the departure of the rangers, Antelope Arth approached Christie, who rested on a fallen log at one side, and said:

“Pardon my intrusion, Miss Dorne, for I know you prefer to be alone. I desire to speak a few words to you, and shall speak directly to the point. You are in love; this I have learned from different sources. You love Idaho Tom; but you are not the only one that loves him.”

Christie started and looked with wild-eyed astonishment into the young ranger's face.

“My words surprise you, I know; but hear me through, Miss Dorne, the youth continued.

“The daughter of a robber saw Idaho Tom, and fell desperately in love with him. Her name was Aree Van Pruss. Three times in succession she saved his life. The last time was the night you left him on the plain. The outlaws captured him and buried him alive; Aree rescued him—Aree loves him dearly and has made every effort to win his love, but all in vain.”

“Mr. Clayton, how do you know all this?” Christie asked.

“I'll tell you,” he said, in a low tone, “but you mustn't betray me; I am that girl, Aree Van Pruss!”

Christie could scarcely suppress a cry of surprise at this revelation, but by a mighty effort she succeeded in maintaining silence, until she was enabled to speak composedly.

“You—a woman?” she stammered.

“Yes, I am Aree,” replied the youth, and he showed that his mustache was false, and that the nut-brown color of his little hands and handsome face was the stain of walnut-juice.

“I am a robber's daughter, and have feared being recognized by Kit Bandy more than all others here. He was formerly of our band, and when he recognized my horse and saddle I was sure he would then penetrate my disguise. But, fortunately, he has not, nor do I want him to. I donned this disguise for one purpose—that I might be near the man I loved—Idaho Tom. I recognized you by the picture in his possession, then by keeping on the alert I overheard enough to satisfy me that you loved, and were loved, and that Idaho Tom was the man. Then weaving the different threads together that I had thus picked up, and adding one other fact—that which caused you to sink in a swoon last night—I discovered a secret of which you and I alone, of all here, have the faintest idea.”

Christie turned white, and for a moment it seemed she would sink fainting to the earth. Aree, the beautiful child of the hills, for such Antelope Arth really was, saw her emotions, and at once came to her rescue, as it were.

“Do not fear me, Christie,” she said; “for although I love Idaho Tom, I feel no envy, no jealousy. My woman's instinct, rendered all the more sensitive by the yearnings of love, read the secret of your young heart. I do not wonder that you have suffered; I only wonder that you have withstood to the terrible shock that you have been subjected to, at all. Idaho Tom has been in my power, and the first impulse of my heart was to let no other enjoy the love I so yearned. But my better nature prevailed, and through hopes of the future I set him at liberty. But now I see there is no hope; still I do not regret what I have done, and shall do even more. If Tom is a prisoner, he will be taken to the stronghold of Prairie Paul, and thither I am now going. If he is there, I will again liberate him and send him to you with all my blessings.”

“Oh, kind friend!” exclaimed Christie, “do this for me, and I will never cease to pray for you.”

“I felt in hopes,” Aree continued, “that he had escaped, and joined his command; and as I said before, I donned this disguise that I

might be near him. Do not tell Kit Bandy of it, nor your friends. I am going to slip away and return to my hidden home among the hills. You may think me a bold, bad girl, Christie; but God knows I have lived a pure and virtuous life, even though I am a robber's child. For years have I been shut out from all pleasure and society save that of the Indians and mount men. I have known what good society and its influence were—I have not lived all my days in the hills, where my whole existence has been a constant yearning for something—I knew not what. When I, by accident, first beheld the face of Idaho Tom, my heart grasped at his love as a drowning man grasps at a straw. But all is now lost—irretrievably lost. But I thank Heaven that I have been, and that I still may be, permitted to do some good in this world—to make others happy. Some day, Christie, if I know where you are living, I may come—”

Here she leaned forward and whispered the rest in Christie's ear; then, rising to her feet, walked away toward the point where her horse was hitched.

Christie blushed, and stammered a reply, but in her confusion, she spoke only to herself. For quite a minute she was completely overcome, but recovering her presence of mind, she put her thoughts to work.

Her own woman's instinct told her that Antelope Arth was a woman, and the impression left upon her mind was a favorable one. It gave her relief, for she believed, since Aree had probed the great secret of her life, that the robber's child would keep her word.

Antelope Arth was suddenly missing from the grove, but no one save Christie knew aught of his absence.

The rangers, the Triangle, and Kit Bandy, took their departure westward, and soon after the hunters turned their faces toward Menominee.

#### CHAPTER XXXIII.

##### ON THE TRAIL.

KIT BANDY acted as guide in the pursuit of Idaho Tom and his captors, and Dakota Dan as scout.

By noon they reached the eastern foothills of the mountains, and halted for dinner just outside of the line that marked the eastern boundary of the Sioux reservation.

Before resuming their journey, they decided upon their course of action. From what the elk hunters had told them, they felt fully satisfied that the captive seen in the power of the enemy was none other than Idaho Tom; and from the course they were following, Kit Bandy felt certain that he would be taken at once to the stronghold of Prairie Paul. As the ex-robber's ideas seemed altogether probable, the party agreed to make its way directly toward the outlaw's den, and so at once continued their journey.

In an hour or so Dakota Dan struck the track of five or six horses leading westward, and without a single doubt in the minds of any one of the party, it was decided to be the trail of those of whom they were in pursuit. Acting upon this general decision, old Dan was put upon the lead, the rest following behind.

“I'm in my element now, squire,” Dan said, as he shuffled along, his dog before him, and his mare behind; “put me on a trail if you want to git downright business outen us. I was raised on the trail, Bandy, and 'spect to die on the trail.”

“Dan-yil,” said Kit, facetiously, “I've done a bit of trailin' in my days, too, and I'm not so slow either. I used to be a detective in Frisco, and the way I scented out crime was a caution to wrong-doers. Then I used to be a trapper in the Santa Barbara valley, and the maddest I ever war war when I war war. Trap-thieves war plentier than game, and thar was a feller named Traplift—a nickname—that made a business of stealin' from the traps of us old trappers; and so one night six of us met and held a meetin' to take steps to hunt Traplift down, and we had everything arranged to catch him and went to our cabin to wait till the time for action come. That night a light skiff of snow fell—the first that I'd ever seen in the Santa Barbara—and I just come to the conclusion it war sent for our especial benefit to catch Traplift. Bright and early I set out, and, would you believe it, I struck that dinged old thief's track in the valley afore I'd gone a mile. I follered it on and on for not less than ten miles, and finally tracked him to his hole—a cave in the mountain side, and when I worked around and got inside the den, what do you think I found, Dan-yil?”

“Traplift, in course.”

“Traplift, thunder! I found a paper on which were writ these words: ‘not much, ole fools, for I'm goin' to waltz backwards,’ and then I seed that he'd retreated from the cave, waltzin' backwards; and he got away, stealin' from every trap as he went, the ornery old vagabond.”

Dan indulged in a low outburst of laughter, as he replied:

“You couldn't fool the Triangle that way, Bandy—you couldn't, for a fact. That pup could foller a year old trail of a ship—fact; and whenever he gits to the end of a trail he's sure to find somethin' thar. Now, here we are on the trail of Idaho Thomas, as we firmly believe, and when we reach the end of it, why we 'spect to find Tom on it.”

“I hope so, Dan,” said Darcy Cooper; “and I hope he will be alive.”

“Where will we cross the Powder, Kit—at that ford which we crossed coming out?” asked Nat Osmond.

“Ya-as; we'll strike the river 'bout thar, and if we have any trouble at all gittin' into the hills, it'll be at that point,” said Bandy.

“Why are we any more likely to strike trouble there,” asked Cooper, “than any other point?”

“Well, the varmints may find out we're follerin' 'em, or else suspect that we are, and so set a trap for us as they did comin' down. That ford'll be a good place to git into a fight, boys.”

“Fight's our ticket, and so let 'em come,” said old Dan. “I want you to see the Triangle in a fight once, Bandy. Great Judea! but you'll see sparks fly outen the atmosphere.”

“Horn of Joshua! I've seed sparks fly outen my eyes a million times durin' my residence with my wife, Sabina. She war a pizen old critter 'bout shovin' a stick of wood or the shovel into a feller's face or ribs. I think Sabina's caliber war about that of yer mare, Patience, Dan-yil.”

“Don't cast any insinuations onto that mare, Bourbon, or I'll demand satisfaction at the pint of the bagonet.”

“I'm sure, Dan-yil, this is a free country, especially to speak of one's b'loved wife and pard. If you don't take it as a compliment, why back it goes.”

Thus Dan and Kit carried on a sort of desultory conversation for some time, and finally, as the sun sunk low in the western sky, the two old bordermen proposed that they should halt for the night. To this the young men



made no dissent, and so they drew rein in a wooded valley, where grass, water and fuel could be obtained.

As it wanted an hour or two yet of night, Dan proposed to Kit that they make a reconnaissance of the surrounding vicinity, and his proposition being accepted, the two left camp, going in opposite directions.

The old men had been gone scarcely ten minutes ere a number of mounted men rode out of the woods and surrounded the camp of the rangers. They were dressed in the uniform of United States soldiers, whom the rangers knew, at a glance, they were.

"Gentlemen, I demand your unconditional surrender," said the captain in command.

Although the rangers were completely taken by surprise, they were not long in deciding upon their course of action, and at once manifested a disposition to refuse the officer's demand.

Said Darcy Cooper, to whom the young men now looked as spokesman:

"We feel that we are under no military restrictions, and have the privilege of refusing your demands."

"Sir, we have instructions to arrest and conduct from these hills all persons found here in violation of the Government's treaty with the Indians; therefore we insist upon a peaceable surrender."

"We are not a band of cowards, by any means, captain," responded Cooper; "and while we feel no fear whatever, we should like to have an amicable understanding that we may be permitted to pursue our way into the hills. We have but one object now in view, in coming here, and that is the rescue of a friend in the power of a band of outlaws, and soon as he is safe, it is our intention to leave at once."

"Then I am to understand that you will resist any attempt to stop you from advancing further?" said the officer, though he maintained his composure with remarkable good grace.

"You are, captain," was Darcy's firm reply.

"But we have quite a little army encamped near here, under General Custer, with which I am afraid you would stand no show whatever."

"Very probably, if we have the army to contend with; but I think if our case, with some additional facts, were stated to the general, he would allow us to pass unmolested."

"As to that, I cannot say," answered the officer; "but as I am acting under instructions, I—"

"What in the great horn of Joshua means this?" exclaimed a voice near, and Kit Bandy came blustering into camp. "Sojers, by crackles! Howdy, boys?"

The soldiers regarded the old man with a look of the deepest curiosity, and a smile mounted the face of some, as Kit struck an attitude before them.

Darcy Cooper explained the situation briefly as possible, and asked Kit's opinion.

"Horn of Joshua?" exclaimed Kit, scratching his head reflectively. "This is a rather perplexing attitude to pass judgment on, I can't see how we can give up our pursuit, even if Uncle Sam is desirous of keepin' inviolate his contract with the Indians. I notice the red varmints are not so particular 'bout keepin' up their side of the fence. But, captain, I really can't see how we can surrender without a fight."

"We are not insisting on a fight," replied the officer, for he saw that there was mettle in the little band of rangers worthy of his own steel; "we only desire that you submit to be quietly escorted from this reservation."

"I wish old Dan-yl war here," said Kit, perplexed, "and I think he would settle things his way. But see here, capt'n, you leave yer men here to watch these boys, and take me up to the general, and I'll bet a tip that I talk him outen takin' us away afore we git our friend."

The captain accepted this proposition, for it would afford the opportunity to make the situation known at camp without creating any mistrust in the breast of the rangers. He was really afraid to attempt coercive measures, for he saw the boys were well armed and ready for fight; and so he dismounted, and leading his horse, walked with old Kit up the valley toward camp.

As they moved along, the captain noticed that there was a material change in both the appearance and talk of the old borderman, and at once came to the conclusion that he was playing a part. But it was no trouble for Kit Bandy to play a double role, for he had already proved himself one of those persons past finding out.

Ten minutes' walk brought them to the edge of the camp; they passed the guard and moved on toward General Custer's tent. On the way they met the general, to whom the captain introduced Kit, and explained the latter's desire of an interview with the commandant.

Custer led the way to his tent, that was located at the base of a high shelving rock, and when it was reached they entered. The general seated himself upon a camp stool, and motioned Kit to a seat opposite. By this time it was dark, and the tent was lit up with a dim light from a pocket lantern.

"Now, then," said the general, "I am ready to hear what you have to say."

"To begin with, general," said Kit, modifying his tone to a degree that would have surprised his friends, "I will say, that, should the secret that I am going to reveal to you become known to some of—well, should it become generally known, it would cost me my life!"

"I fully comprehend," said the general; "you are not what you appear to your friends."

"I daresay, general, I have appeared for an old fool, and have been taken as such; but that's not business. Here's a document," said Kit, producing a stained and dirty paper from an inner pocket, "that I want you to examine, and then see, sir, what you have to offer on the subject."

The general took the paper, and in the dim light that lit up the tent, examined it carefully—reading it over a number of times. Kit watched the man's face, and finally detected a faint light of satisfaction upon it.

Finally the general lifted his eyes from the paper and said:

"But what about those rangers? Have you or they?"

"That, general—that," interrupted Kit, pointing his long, bony finger at the paper, "gives me the right to call assistance if needed, don't you see?"

"Then those men are under your command, are they?"

"Wal," said Kit, squirming under the question, "I rather think they are, general."

"You think they are?"

"No; I don't think anything about it—I know it," said Kit, his quick mind grasping at a plausible, and at the same time, truthful subterfuge.

"Then I presume I have no grounds for interference, Mr. Bandy," said the general, "and will allow you to pass on unmolested."

"Thank you, general, thank you; but I've

one request to make of you, and that is this: don't let any one get a hold of what I've told you, for I'd not be safe 'mong friends or foes if it got out."

"I shall not break confidence with you, Mr. Bandy."

"Very well, then, our affairs are understood—you go your way and I go mine, and mum's the word."

"Exactly."

Kit rose to leave. He advanced to the door of the tent, turned to bid the general good-night, when his keen eye happened to catch sight of a dark, spherical object near the general's camp-stool. It was shaded from the light, and what it was, Kit could not determine at a glance, but it arrested his attention from some cause or other; and a moment later a cry of surprise broke from his lips.

"What's the matter, Mr. Bandy?" asked the general, starting to his feet, and permitting the light to fall almost under the stool.

"By the horn of Joshua!—general, I'm gone up!"

"Why?"

"Don't you keep guards posted 'round camp?"

"I do; but I declare this is getting to be—"

"Look there, general; do you see that slit in the canvas just back of your stool?—well, sir, if an eavesdropping, human head wasn't withdrawn from there this moment, I hope I may never breathe."

"Then it was none of my men!" exclaimed the general, and rushing out, he gave orders to hunt the skulking enemy down.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## DAKOTA DAN'S ADVENTURES.

DAKOTA DAN and his dog made their way north, after parting with the rangers at camp. Their course lay along a rough, wooded ridge, that finally dipped into a wide, densely-timbered valley; and despite the old man's efforts, it was nearly dusk ere he reached this low land. He turned down the valley, moving along briskly for nearly a mile, when he was brought to a sudden halt by sight of a number of camp-fires twinkling through the night before him.

"By Judea, Humility!" he exclaimed, in an undertone, stooping and laying his hand upon the dog's head, and saying: "There's either Ingins, or robbers, or a gang of miners thereabouts; and if it's robs, the young captain may be with them. Howsumderv, we'll feel off that way and make some inquiry. Now go easy, Humility—easy."

He stole like a shadow down the valley, keeping well in under the eastern bluffs. The forms of men passing to and fro across the light became discernible as he advanced, and as one fire after another burst on his view as he rounded a sharp curve in the valley, he became somewhat astonished as well as apprehensive of danger. He finally, however, succeeded in making out the encampment as that of a military party, and the discovery served, in a measure, to quiet his fears.

Dan stopped to deliberate upon the matter, and while thus engaged, he saw an officer and Kit Bandy making their way toward the only tent in the bivouac—the head-quarters of the commandant. He saw by Kit's gesture and movements throughout that the old ex-robber was unusually enthusiastic over something or other, and no sooner did he disappear in the general's tent than the spirit of curiosity possessed him. Why it was he could not tell, for no thought suggested it. He did not mistrust Kit in anyway, and yet that unbidden desire which often forces one to act upon the spur of the moment, and contrary to what they would have taken the second thought, seized upon Dan, and sent him creeping with all the silence of a cat toward the tent.

He had everything in his favor so far as darkness and the cover of rock and brush were concerned. To the perpendicular facade of the bluff flanking the camp on the north, and against which the tent stood, was entrusted the guardianship of that side; and so the old ranger encountered no picket there when he reached the bluff. This much accomplished, he began to descend the declivity, and in a minute he was in the rear of the tent. Creeping on hands and knees to the side of the structure, he listened. He heard the preliminaries that prefaced the opening of the occupants' conversation, but not being satisfied with this, he inserted the point of his knife into the canvas behind the general, and cut a slit through which he could put his head. He felt safe enough, in doing this, for he could see the outlines of the general through the canvas, and with his head half-thrust through the slit, he listened to the two men's conversation.

The old ranger was not a little surprised at what he heard Kit state, and yet it was but evidence of what he had mistrusted as soon, almost, as he met him. But what Kit Bandy's mission could be, he could not form the faintest conception. However, he resolved to hear the conversation through, and did so—withdrawing his head from the tent a moment too late to escape the keen eyes of Kit Bandy.

Fortunately, however, he was not recognized by the old man, owing to the shadows that enveloped his face; but he heard Bandy's exclamation of surprise, and at once made all possible haste from the confines of the encampment.

Once in the woods, the old ranger had no fears of danger from pursuit, and moved away more leisurely. He aimed to retrace his footsteps to camp, and had hoped to get there ahead of Kit, but, owing to the darkness, he became somewhat bewildered in the strange, sinuous windings of the valley and wooded labyrinth of the hills, and was led on a mile or two further from camp. He finally stopped to get his bearings, and in looking around, discovered the faint glimmer of a light some distance north of him. He knew at once that this light must be in the camp of enemies, and he resolved to reconnoiter if he did not get back to his friends that night. So he at once moved away in that direction, feeling certain that he would find the party that had Idaho Tom in custody around the camp-fire before him.

It required but a few minutes' walk to bring him in close proximity to the camp, and to his delight he found that it was the party, truly enough, that had Captain Tom a prisoner. He had obtained a position where he could peer into the camp. He could see six or eight men talking about, apparently laboring under some uneasiness. He also caught sight of Idaho Tom who was seated against a tree, with his hands and feet bound.

The question now arose in Dan's mind: how was he going to effect his young friend's release? To return to camp and bring the rangers to his assistance was quite feasible, yet while gone, the robbers might leave also, and the only chance to rescue Tom be forever lost. In a fight, he would not stand the shadow of a chance with seven men. He had left his rifle at camp, but was provided with a pair of revolvers and a knife.

The old ranger was not long in making up his mind as to the course he should pursue. He resolved to try stratagem first, as he could see

that the robbers were already excited and apparently upon the eve of flight from some cause or other.

Owing to the timber and the condition of the surroundings, Dan believed that the opposite side of the camp would suit his purpose far better than the one he occupied, and so he at once began creeping around that way.

He had gone but a short distance when he found his footsteps arrested by a deep rift or canon. He felt the cold wind rush up into his face, and when he tossed a pebble down over the precipice a deep, hollow rumble came up from below. But not to be outdone, he turned and crept along the edge of the canon, passing within twenty steps of the enemies' camp, and finally gaining a position on the east side. He was sure he had gained this position unobserved, but no sooner had he ensconced himself therein than he heard footsteps retreating therefrom toward camp; and a moment later, he saw a man enter camp in no little excitement.

Dan knew full well what was up, and at once began to put distance between himself and camp. He had gone but a short ways however when he came to the edge of the rift again, and was compelled to bear to the left; but to his surprise and fear, he had gone but a short distance in this direction, when he found himself on the edge of another yawning chasm.

The situation was now growing rather alarming to the old ranger, for, with an abyss on either side, and an overwhelming number of axes behind him, the chance of escape was but one in many, for he felt satisfied that the two canons came together, and that he was in the forks from whence there was no escape save by the route he had entered. But this was now impossible. Seven men with glaring pine torches were in hot pursuit of him. The space between the two rifts was not more than four rods wide, and rapidly growing narrower. Dan retreated to the point where the two chasms met like the arms of the letter Y. Then he glanced back. His pursuers were within three rods of him. The glare of their dashing, flickering torches fell upon him. Humility barked fiercely—dashed out at the advancing foe, then came dashing back to his master's side.

The robbers fired several random shots after the dog; then Dan heard one of them say: "We've got the old devil caged, and will shoot him or drive him over the precipice. Close up, boys, and look sharp; don't let him escape."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 324.)

## UNTO PERFECTION.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

Out of the little grows the great,  
A little song is sung each hour—  
Each tiny bud brings forth a flower—  
And Heaven at length is consummate!  
So out of young love growth old,  
A little work is wrought each day—  
By little words Love wins its way  
Till it can scarce be told!

## The Guard Above the Heart.

BY LOU CAPSADELL.

I make no murmur, steady, calm,  
Spinn-like I gaze on days ahead.  
—MILLER'S MYRRH.

"I BELIEVE I have given all the orders, Alda, just as you wished. The little library is already arranged, with the last little bracket and statuette in place; the dining-room and kitchen, with china, silver, linen—with a superb old-fashioned side-board just as you directed—have everything in place. And your room—how I wish you would go and see it. It is beautiful! lovely! There can be no greater harmony than the blending blue and gold furnishings of that room—except the harmony of our love and lives."

"You are very good, Arthur, and I enjoy your enthusiasm over these little trifles, for, after all, they go forward making up the happiness of a woman's life."

"Thanks, Alda; but not half so good as you in loving me so tenderly and loyally. But I was bothered about one thing, sweet."

"What was it? Maybe I can help you."

"Your writing desk—it was such a gem—I don't believe you can ever write anything but poetry at it. I could not get a place in the library to suit me. This light was too dark and that was too dull. I fancied it needed a soft, mellow light, so I set it in your room and will leave you to arrange a place for it. I flatter myself that everything else will please you."

"The pictures?"

"They are all hung. I can hardly tell you now where each one is. The 'Beatrice Cenci' I hung over the library door which enters to your room."

"Why, what made you give it such a poor place as that?"

"For just one little reason of my own. Her great, sad suffering eyes, with their strange mixture of submissive patience and self-assertion, are to me duplicates of your own eyes. So I hung it there as a reminder to me that the door beneath it opens to a place sacred to love, wherein the goddess of my life presides; also, that when the door is shut your face shall still look down upon me and follow me with their guardful tenderness."

"Though your love and fancy, Arthur, make my eyes to-day as luminous as Psyche's, to-morrow those who love most and dream most, may forget that I ever existed; for who can determine now whether Psyche, the very ideal of all poets, was a reality or a dream?"

"But to-morrow you will be all the reality my life shall ever know, for when the priest has had his service, and the witnesses have written their names, and your dainty finger has a new ring upon it, I shall put you down in the pretty blue and gold room where Beatrice keeps guard. After that you shall dismiss or retain the historical sentinel, as you please, for you shall fill all my to-morrows with your own sweet self. But remember, we are to be promptly at the church at four. Good-by, sweet, till then."

Her eyes filled up with tears, and she clung to him tenderly as if she would not have him go, but she only said:

"Well, Arthur, let Beatrice stay where she is, and whenever you look at her, think of me—if you will."

Arthur went away, busy and happy with thoughts of his wedding day.

Alda stood still until the door had closed behind him, and then she clasped her hands and raising them to the blank walls before her, she cried:

"What am I, that I should deceive and desert such a man?"

"We twain once well in sunder,  
What will the mad gods do  
For hate with me, I wonder,  
Or what for love with you?"

When Arthur went on the morrow where many guests were assembled for the wedding, the white-robed bride was gone. No one

knew where. But in her room was found a note for Arthur Leroy, which read:

"Arthur, forgive. I have not meant to deceive you. How it came about I hardly know any better than yourself. But it is true, almost as much to my surprise as to your own, that when you read this I shall be the wife of Howard Russell. Farewell, and may your noble heart find peace in forgetfulness of ALDA."

Five years after Arthur Leroy was standing watching the dark-eyed picturesque group which sat on the gray steps of the Trinita di Monte in Rome.

While he stood and looked, a tall, graceful woman, dressed in mourning, came down the street, paused and stood beside him. She glanced hurriedly at the same fancifully-dressed through which his own eyes were scrutinizing.

Arthur was pursuing his art studies at Rome, and was searching for a model. The woman beside him was on a similar mission. She, however, seemed to find none among the group to suit her, and started to go. As she turned their glances met. Arthur and Alda were face to face!

Her eyes were sadder than ever.

"Arthur!" she exclaimed in surprise, holding out her white, slender hand.

The blood receded from his face, and left it white as marble. The old life, the old pain surged back.

He took the hand she extended, and said, in a cool, calm voice:

"Why, Mrs. Russell, I am surprised to meet you here. In search of a model, too?" he added quickly, and with wonderful self-possession, in order to turn the conversation from personal subjects.

"Yes," she said, "but finding none in the street down which I came, nor here, to suit my purpose, I am going to the Piazza di Spagna. Won't you join me, and tell me how you are and how you have been?"

He walked beside her, as she started off, saying:

"Thanks! As to how I am now—well; how I have been I have forgotten."

She felt the little thrust, but it was easy for her woman's wit to parry it, by saying, with all her old naïfeté of manner:

"Well, you see the influence of your taste has had its influence upon me. I have turned artist myself."

"You did not have to turn artist; you were always one by nature."

She saw clearly enough that the steel was still in this man's soul. She knew that she herself had thrust it there, five years ago. She resolved to pluck it out, here and now. The time and place were unsuited to her purpose. But, perhaps, no other occasion would ever occur.

I did not think I should ever meet you in Rome," he said.

"Nor I," said Alda; "but Mr. Russell died a few years ago and left me almost without means or resources or any kind."

She paused, but the announcement of the death of the man who had robbed Arthur Leroy of his bride, drew no comment from his set lips. She had long ago taught him to endure surprises in silence.

"Then I came here to study and to learn—if I can—the dream toil of an artist's life."

"In which calling you have my best wishes for your success, and my service is always at your command," he said, with unfeigned sincerity.

"Your good wishes, Arthur, are grateful to me; and I shall be only too glad to avail myself of your valuable suggestions if—if—I may only feel and know that I am forgiven."

"You are forgiven, but I do not forget. Everything which I put into your room is there yet, untouched. From that day to this hour the doors have been locked; the long curtains at the windows are drawn down, the blinds are closed, and a deep shadow rests upon all within. So the doors and windows are closed about the memory in my heart. The shadow rested there also a long time. But it soon will be lifted. The 'Beatrice' I brought with me and put it above my door here in Rome as an emblem of the guard which you had taught me to set upon my heart. At last I have found one pair of eyes more luminous among the shadows than are those of Beatrice or Psyche. In a week the picture above my door, and the guard above my heart will be taken down, and the light of the new eyes will enter in."

She was in doubt as to his meaning. Was he purposely obscure? Was he talking to her old love and heart, and for her ears, and taking it for granted that she could not misunderstand him.

"God bless you, Arthur!" she said, "you are magnanimous. I do not deserve as much as you accord."

"For the old love's sake—for the sake of the grand and beautiful Alda—"

She started as he called her name. He had not done so before. She laid her hand upon his arm, and said, in a low, tender voice, as her eyes filled with tears:

"Arthur!"

"Wait a moment, please," he resumed.

"For the sake of the Alda which was her little room, which my love made for her, shall never be opened while I live. Next week I shall be married to Miss Bruce. I presume you know her, as she temporarily resides here and frequents the studios."

The hand upon his arm trembled, and the great, grand woman at his side grew deadly pale and swayed forward as they walked. He drew the hand more securely through his arm, and added:

"Will you pause at the di Spagna, or shall I see you to your hotel?"

"We will go on, if you please. Thanks for your kindness."

Then, after a pause, she said:

"You have been frank and just, Arthur. The tenderest are the cruelest. I don't know how it is, but we have both proven it. May God forgive us both, and bless you always."

Five years have rolled the dusty wheels over that sad day when Arthur and Alda met and parted in Rome.

He is residing with his pretty blue-eyed wife in Paris.

Alda is back at her old home, and is famous and rich.

Frequently, when the weather is fair, a tall, queenly woman is driven slowly through a certain street, and from the open phaeton looks up curiously, reverently, tenderly, to the windows of a certain house which have not been open for ten years. The blinds are covered with dust, the curtains and all the pretty blue and gold furnishings are crumbling under the immovable shadow within. But the old love is only a memory now, covered with years, the rainbow-tinted aspirations which were set within it once have given place to the solid colors of a calm, smooth life without.

Schools to teach girls plain needle-work are proposed in New York. It is needless to say that the success of such schools will prove only sew-sew.

## WHICH SHALL I TAKE?

This is often a serious question with the invalid. He finds the market flooded with proprietary medicines, scores of which are recommended as certain cures for his peculiar ailment. He reads the papers, circulars, and almanacs, and finds each sustained by plausible arguments setting forth its virtues and specific action. The recommendations are as strong for one as for another. The cures claimed to have been wrought by one are as wonderful as those claimed to have been wrought by another. In his perplexity and doubt, the sufferer is sometimes led to reject all. But it should be borne in mind that this condition of things is one that can not be remedied. In a land where all are free, the good, the truly valuable—must come into competition with the vile and worthless, and must be brought to public notice by the same instrumentality, which is *advertising*. In such a case, perhaps the only absolute proof that a remedy is what it claims to be, is to try it. The "test of a pudding is the eating of it." "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is the apostolic injunction. There may, however, be stronger presumptive evidence in favor of one remedy than there is in favor of another, and this should be allowed its due weight. A due regard to this may save a vast amount of experimenting and a useless outlay of money. As presumptive evidence in favor of Dr. Pierce's Family Medicines, the Proprietor desires to say, that they are prepared by a new and scientific process by which the virtues of the crude plants and roots are extracted without the use of a particle of alcohol. Not a particle of this destroyer of our race enters into the composition of either his Medical Discovery or Favorite Prescription. This consideration alone ought certainly to rank them high above the vile compounds saturated with alcohol, Jamaica rum, sour beer, or vinegar, which are everywhere offered for sale. Again, they are of uniform strength, and their virtues can never be impaired by age. They are also made from fresh herbs and roots, gathered in their appropriate season, when they are flush with medicinal properties. In support of these claims, the following testimony is offered:

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I am, most respectfully, yours,  
ATHA B. CROOKS.

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## CENTENNIAL DINING.

BY CHAS. MORRIS.

I marked them both, a fresh young pair;  
He had got the hay seed out of his hair,  
And his only agricultural dash  
Was the cultivating a young mustache:  
A slim youth of noble blood,  
For his pedigree ran to the flood,  
And his coat of arms, as the records show,  
Was a harrow crossed with rake and hoe.

And she was a maiden fair and spry,  
With a touch of mischief in her eye—  
A lively, tripping, merry elf  
With the best opinion of herself;  
Dressed a la mode, pull-back and all,  
From overskirt to waterfall,  
That fashion bida, and with every part  
Of a loving maid—except the heart.

In a Centennial saloon  
They sat that summer afternoon,  
And 'twas a marvelous thing to see  
That girl's feast of gastronomy.  
Straight through the bill of fare she ate,  
While he sat by with joy elate;  
But I saw a sudden anguish fill  
His face as he read the frightful bill.

A charge for waiter, a charge for chair,  
A charge for bringing the bill of fare,  
A charge for water, a charge for ice,  
And a most unaccountable price  
For every item, from soup to wine,  
That folks dispose of when they dine.  
'Twas the roundest of round sums, I feel,  
That was footed up for that square meal.

Blue as skin-milk that young man grew  
As in the till his purse he threw,  
And up the spot, with reckless fling,  
Sent his grandmother's wedding ring.  
But when he saw that and young swain—  
The waiter eye his watch and chain,  
Straight out he slid, and sloped away  
Like a honey bee on a holiday.

His damsel smiled; and then I think,  
I actually saw that girl wink,  
At least there was a monstrous sly  
Curl in the corner of her eye.  
But when, at length, I heard her laugh,  
I wanted to wring the waiter's neck;  
For it seemed to me a shame untold  
The way that trusting youth was sold.

All unsophisticated youth  
Who dwell 'twixt Boston and Duluth,  
My warning take, beware the girls!  
Avoid the witchcraft of their curls;  
And do not even take your aunt  
To a Centennial restaurant.  
Till you have learned how far to dare  
The perils of their bill of fare.

## Love Through Tears.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

It was almost dark of a windy, storm-suggesting January night, and occasional sharp drops of sleet that came driving stingingly against Edgar Bloomfield's bronzed cheeks made him just a little homesick and lonely, as he found himself walking up one of the aristocratic avenues of New York city toward Josiah Otis' mansion.

He was a tall, broad-shouldered fellow, with a handsome head set firmly, strengthfully, on his neck—with a frank, good-looking face, that Bertha Otis had very greatly admired the summer before, when she and her father had spent several weeks, during the time Mr. Otis was so dimly threatened with apoplexy, at the hospitable farm-house of cousin Bloomfield.

Not that Edgar and Bertha were nearer related than third cousins, but they had laughingly declared it should be regarded as nearer, and pretty, graceful Bertha had insisted on calling him "cousin Edgar," and at the same time giving him such glances of her dark brown eyes from under the coquettish lawn hat that it had more than once occurred to Edgar to wish she would not consider him any relation at all.

It had been a grand, glorious summer, whose memory, lighted by Bertha's eyes and Bertha's smile, and Bertha's earnest invitation for him to "come see them at home, some time," made the young man's heart bounce very unbecomingly as he walked up the avenue, watching the numbers on the massive, elegant doors, and feeling very much as if heaven were close at hand as he caught the first glimpse of the Otis' palatial home.

He had contemplated it so long, so eagerly—this visit to New York, when he should renew his sweet intimacy with Bertha, and hear her call him "cousin Ed" in the same low tones that had made his heart throb so when they two had floated down Pond Lily stream with the tide, on long, sultry summer days, or when they had taken delightful strolls on breezy moonlight nights, and Bertha's white fingers had rested so confidently on his coat-sleeve, and those wondrous witching eyes of hers had glanced up, or hid under long-lashed, blue-veined lids, as the mood took her dainty princessship.

Oh, those days! those dreams! their blissful memory was on him so strongly as he rung the door-bell, half nervously, half impatiently, and listened to the music from within the brilliantly-lighted rooms, and heard occasional peals of light, refined laughter, as he awaited the answer to his summons—waited and congratulated himself that he had "happened" on "company night"—little imagining it was a fair sample of every night's gaiety at the Otis mansion.

The well-trained servant that opened the door made no demonstration at sight of the big, broad-shouldered, undeniably country-born, country-bred guest, and bowed as he would have done had Miss Bertha's specially favored admirer, young Delavan Gregory, of Fifth avenue *creme de la creme*, stood on the threshold.

"I've come to see Mr. Otis and the family. I suppose they're at home."

In a second he was ushered, with a clear, loud announcement, into the fairyland of the Otis saloons.

And truly it was like a picture to the bewildered guest, whose tastes, so wholesome and simple had received equally wholesome and simple stimuli.

It dazzled him for a moment—the glare and rainbow glitter of the chandeliers, the translucent softness of pale rose-pink silk curtains; the flash of the mirrors, the gleam of the marble, the rich hues of the carpets and the satin damask furniture, the fragrance of the hot-house flowers, the shimmer and rustle of silk drapery, all the bright glances of eyes—and among them all the fairest, sweetest, best, daintiest little Bertha Otis, looking like a very queen of grace and beauty in a costume of ecrû-perle silk that floated like moonlight sea-waves around her.

Edgar went straight up to her, his frank, glad face showing all his pride and delight, and extended his big, ungloved hand in a grasp that almost crushed her tiny kidded palm.

"Bertha! how good it is to see you again! And you look just as sweet as a peach, too."

A little titter from an elaborately gotten-up young lady standing near made Ed's honest face flame crimsonly; then a haughty, annihilating glance from Bertha's own beautiful eyes made him pale.

"Thank you, Mr. Bloomfield. I believe the season we boarded at your farm improved my health somewhat."

Was this Bertha—the girl he had dreamed of, the girl he had hated to hear call him "cousin"—Bertha Otis, who had ridden on the hay-loads, and gone fishing with him, openly

repudiating him and actually insulting him in her own house?

He bowed somewhat awkwardly, and turned to speak to Mr. Otis, who shook hands hurriedly, as if anxious to have it over.

"Glad to see you, my boy! Down for a lark, eh? Hope you'll make yourself at home, and all that, you know."

And then Ed sat down in a big chair and watched the dancers through the set, and saw Bertha's pretty little coquettish with Mr. Delavan Gregory, and saw that gentleman's undisguised admiration of the girl, and heard Miss Delaphine Gregory laugh and glance over at him, and then he knew it was better he should go.

"I am not wanted here, that's sure. I wouldn't care—only—only—for Bertha to treat me so."

And it cut deeper yet when, after hunting her up to say good-by, he was rewarded by a courteous bow only, as she took Mr. Gregory's arm and promenaded away.

And the next day Ed was at home on the farm, with an expression of touching sadness on his face that his old mother wondered at, and shrewdly guessed. And the winter days wore on, teaching Ed Bloomfield the lesson that makes wiser people of those who have it to learn, hard, pitifully hard though the learning is—the humanizing of one's ideal, the waking from the one sweet dream of one's life, the knowledge that all the beauty and hope that glorified one's days was but an illusion.

"I am sure I don't see how I can help you, Bertha, any more than I have done. I have advised you and you refuse to take it. You can't surely blame me."

Miss Blanche Gregory smoothed the snow-white curls of her lap-dog, and Bertha Otis, pale as a lily, with her deep black clothes trailing like the very shadow of darkness around her slight figure, had to use all her self-control to keep back the tears that so wanted to come.

It was all so hard, all so new and strange from the heavy mourning garments she had put on, when her father had been carried home dead from his office, to this present moment, when, hurled from her lifetime position of luxury, wealth and social distinction, Bertha found herself pleading for assistance whereby she might earn her daily bread—pleading with Blanche Gregory, who had been her dearest intimate friend, whose aristocratic brother had been almost an accepted lover, and who, now that trouble had come, was among the very first to proclaim her indifference.

Bertha looked piteously down in Miss Gregory's insipid face.

"But, Blanche, what in Heaven's name shall I do?"

Somehow she had so depended on the friendship Blanche had so often sworn.

"Do! Haven't I told you I haven't the smallest idea of what you will do? Of course, if you don't see fit to accept the position of nursery governess to Mrs. Pinchendown, I can't help it. You can't expect to look to me, you know."

Bertha swallowed a miserable lump in her throat.

"I know, only—"

Blanche interrupted impatiently.

"For Heaven's sake, don't begin to cry, Bertha! If there's anything I detest it is a woman with red eyes and puffy cheeks."

"I am not going to cry, Blanche, but I want to ask if you know—"

Miss Gregory put Floss down tenderly, then shook her silken skirts carefully; but there was iciest heartlessness in her voice when she answered:

"I don't know anything about it, and really you will have to excuse me, Bertha. I promised Delavan we would call on the Jeromes this afternoon, and I've to dress yet."

She turned to her dressing-room with a cutting dismissal of manner that was pitifully painful to the desolate, friendless girl, whose most intimate associates had all dropped her, if not so heartlessly as Blanche Gregory and Delavan.

That was not the end of slights and bitter troubles—it was far nearer the beginning, and in weary days that followed Bertha Otis learned to her complete satisfaction just what the kisses and caresses of enthusiastic girl friends, the compliments and attentions of gentlemen admirers had been worth.

Days and days followed, when all the world was fair and beautiful to see in her spring gale array, when Bertha toiled and struggled in one position after another, not suiting her for one reason, not suiting her for another, until, when fierce midsummer heats poured down on sweltering New York, she was at the end of her resources—homeless, moneyless almost, and oh! so inexpressibly lonely and heart sick.

The long shadows of a July sunset were lying goldenly aslant the big, old-fashioned grass-plot in front of the Bloomfield farmhouse kitchen-door, and motherly, good-natured-faced Mrs. Bloomfield stood in the doorway, shading her eyes with a big flapping sun-bonnet, with her gaze directed toward the low-lying meadow lands where the broad-brimmed hats of the farm hands were bobbing industriously—where she knew Edgar was, with rolled-up shirt-sleeves and cheery face, hard at work as any of them.

Within, the supper-table was loaded with rare home made dainties—sweetest of sweet butter and white bread, and pearly cottage cheese; with great pitchers of icy-cool milk and a huge strawberry shortcake in the post of honor at the center.

Mrs. Bloomfield turned from the calm, peaceful scene without, and a second later some one turned the angle of the house, and glided swiftly in through the open door.

"Mercy sakes alive! Bertha Otis! What on earth is the matter?"

And Bertha, all of a tremble, with her lips quivering piteously, and her eyes glistening with tears, put her arms imploringly around the old lady's neck.

"Don't send me away! I am poor—oh, so poor, and papa has been dead so long, and I haven't another friend in the world if you desert me! I will scrub and wash and—"

Mrs. Bloomfield patted the thin, white cheek, affectionately.

"You poor dear, as if I could find it in my heart to send you away! Take off your things, and by the time Edgar gets in—"

And Edgar walked in that very instant, sun-browned, honest-faced, glorious-hearted.

"I thought I knew you, little cousin, when you passed the meadow, and I came to give you welcome."

He gave her his hand, and Bertha, instead of taking it, like a sensible girl, burst into a perfect torrent of tears.

"Oh, Ed—how can you? after the way I—"

A comical little smile on his face accompanied his answer.

"Never mind anything about anything. Here you are at Vine Creek Farm, where there's plenty and to spare, and here you stay, until mother can bring the roses back, and some more flesh to your poor face. And a glass of milk and a big slice of short-cake 'll be a capital beginning—won't it, mother?"

And they wouldn't let her cry—those two grand, old-fashioned folks, to whom Bertha Otis in her adversity was no less than in her prosperity. And Bertha went about the house with quiet, patient, grave and sweet humility, that made her very like the dream-angel of two years ago.

The latest October glories were on the trees, and fresh frosty scents of coming winter were in the clear, golden, blue air, and Bertha Otis went softly down the lane, in the moonlight, with a white cloud over her beautiful dusky hair, and a graver, more thoughtful expression than usual on her sweet, sensitive lips—an expression that changed suddenly as she came face to face with Edgar, strolling as leisurely as herself, in the charming moonlight.

"Is it you, Bertha? Why, what brings you out?"

She flushed a little as she took his arm.

"I came to think—that is all. You know I have been here a long while, Edgar, and now, that I am stronger and better and happier every way, I think I ought to be making an effort to earn my own living again."

Edgar looked down at her white face, so calmly sweet.

"You are 'happier,' Bertha? Then why leave happiness? Surely it is so easily found. Are you sure you are happier—and have I had any thing to do with it? Bertha! cousin Bertha, dear little girl, won't you promise to stay always and make me the happiest man in the world? Dear, you must have known I always loved you just as I do now."

He felt her shiver on his arm.

"Oh, Edgar! How can you love me—I don't deserve it—I am not worthy to hear such words—"

He lifted her chin so that their eyes met.

"Bertha, one word only. Do you love me?"

The answer came quick, eager, impulsive.

"Oh, yes! yes! But—"

He took her in his arms, to his great, true heart.

"There is no 'but' about it. You love me, my darling, and I love you, and you will be my own precious wife."

She raised her brimming eyes, in happy pride, to his face.

"I never can be worthy of you, Edgar, but if God spares me, you never shall regret this. Oh, Edgar, you are so good—so good!"

And she never had occasion to alter her enthusiastic opinion.

## The Minister's Escape.

BY RALPHE RINGWOOD.

In the interior of Kentucky there is a certain spot where two roads cross each other, known as Harp's Head Crossing, a somewhat singular name, and yet rendered entirely appropriate by reason of a tragedy that was once enacted upon the ground.

As is the case with all newly settled countries, Kentucky soon became the refuge, or "stamping ground," as it was termed, for many of the most desperate characters, whose deeds had caused them to be driven from civilization beyond the mountains.

Among these were two brothers, known as Big and Little Harpe, whose exploits so far exceeded all others in savage bloodthirstiness and wanton cruelty, that at last the entire country arose, and they were hunted down and slain like wild beasts.

For several years they thus devastated the State, always commencing their raid at some remote point and then sweeping forward in a direct line with astonishing rapidity, ruthlessly murdering all who fell into their hands, and leaving behind a wide swath of desolation by fire.

Always mounted upon the best of horses, stolen of course, they were enabled to move in such manner as to defy pursuit, heading for some mountainous district, where, amid the ravines and dense thickets, they would break the trail and disappear for a brief season.

But this could not continue always, and at length justice overtook the fiends.

In one of their periodical raids the brothers came upon an isolated cabin, owned by a settler named Leeper, who, with his wife and two children, had the previous year come into the wilderness and established a home.

Leeper was away in the forest after game when the Harpes rode up and demanded rest and food for themselves and horses.

With willing hands the housewife prepared them a substantial meal, and herself fed the animals while they were partaking of it.

Their work must have been swiftly done, for when the mother returned from the shed where the scanty supply of corn was stored, she stepped within only to discover her two children lying upon the floor with their throats cut, while the murderers were coolly continuing their repast.

Roused to desperation at the terrible sight, the mother sprung forward into the room and sought to secure a heavy fowling-piece that stood in one corner.

Before she had traveled half the distance the sharp report of Big Harpe's pistol rang out, and the poor woman fell, mortally wounded, beside the dead bodies of her children.

Two hours after, Leeper returned, and was met at the threshold by the ghastly sight.

The mother had yet enough of life remaining to describe the perpetrators of the bloody deed, and point out the way they had gone, and then fell back a corpse.

In five minutes the heartbroken settler was on the trail, gathering reinforcements here and there as he passed by or in the neighborhood of the scattered cabins, and having gotten some half-dozen together, pushed forward with a determination to overtake the murderers even if he pursued them to the Gulf. Toward sundown the pair were sighted ahead, and then the race for life commenced.

One of the settlers, better mounted than the others, forged ahead, and finally getting in range, sent a ball through the thigh of the giant, unhorsing him just where another narrow road, or trail, crossed the one he was pursuing.

Down this side path Little Harpe dashed, and, for the moment, escaped, leaving his brother to the tender mercy of the pursuers. The villain begged hard for life, and was so engaged when Leeper rode up.

Dismissing him, he deliberately approached, cocking his rifle as he advanced, and halted within ten feet of the now helpless villain.

Not a word was spoken, nor gesture of interference made, as the terribly wronged husband and father slowly elevated the piece.

A moment later the sharp report broke the silence and the heavy ball went crashing through the enormous head of Big Harpe.

A consultation was held, and it was determined to mark and name the spot appropriately in commemoration of a just deed performed.

Leeper himself cut off the murderer's head, and together the party placed it upon a tall pole which they then planted at the northern angle

of the cross-roads, and named the spot Harpe's Head Crossing.

In the winter of '54 I passed through the little village of Georgetown, Kentucky, and put up for the night at that well-known caravanary, "Pratt's Hotel."

Around the fireplace, a huge cavity into which a six-foot gum log could be rolled, were grouped a number of the old inhabitants of the place, all earnestly listening to one of their number who appeared to be, and in reality was, relating a story.

As I drew near, the words "Big Harpe" fell upon my ear, instantly arousing my interest, and causing me to quietly join the group of listeners.

The speaker was the somewhat celebrated and entirely eccentric Rev. Mr. Smith, better known throughout the West as "Raccoon Smith," a clergyman of the Baptist persuasion, who, though a little odd, was nevertheless a good Christian and perfect gentleman.

"There are not many," said the old gentleman, "who can say they fell into the hands of the Harpes and escaped therefrom, for I assure you that they fully believed in the old saying that dead men tell no tales, and acted thereon on all occasions. My escape from the clutches of the bloodthirsty wretches was, I firmly believe, a direct interposition of a kind Providence in my behalf, though why made, I can only hope some day to understand."

"I had left the station on the Licking early in the morning, and was pushing forward as rapidly as my horse could bear, in hopes of reaching another stockade by the time night should fairly set in."

"There were no broad, well-beaten roads in those days; only narrow trails, often blazes upon the trunks of trees alone to point out the general direction of the point aimed at."

"Noon came and passed, and as yet nothing had occurred to warn me of danger ahead or near, and I was beginning to congratulate myself upon so easy a journey, when at once something transpired which, for a time, totally changed the aspect of affairs."

"I had descended a long, sloping hillside, watered my horse in the little creek at the bottom, and was on the point of ascending the opposite bank, when suddenly from out the bushes on one side the road, came the command to 'halt.'"

"As I glanced hastily up I beheld, riding out of the undergrowth, the most hideous-looking specimen of a human being that could well be imagined."

"A perfect giant in size, with immense features, swollen and bloated, out of which glared a pair of blood-shot eyes, while over all there rested a shock of fiery red hair—a perfect mass of matted filth—upon which there was no covering."

"On beholding so formidable a looking object I at once obeyed the order to halt, and awaited the giant's approach."

"A series of questions as to who I was, where going, and for what purpose, followed; and then came the demand for my rifle, watch, money, and several other articles about my person."

"This opened my eyes. I had fallen into the hands of robbers, and the thought was by no means a pleasant one, and yet it was real comfort compared with my feelings when shortly after a second individual rode up, and by addressing my captor as Bill Harpe informed me who the robber was."

"They were the brothers Big and Little Harpe, and from what I had heard, I knew there was but little chance of my escaping alive."

"I was at once led back into the thicket where a camp had been made, where, around the fire, busy with preparing the evening meal, were two slovenly, hard-featured women, but little, if any, less repulsive than the men."

"I was given a piece of half-cooked venison and told to eat it and enjoy it, as it would probably be some time before I'd get any more. This remark was made by the big villain and produced a laugh from all the others, though I fancied that one of the women cast a look of compassion upon me when the others were not observing."

"I had been informed that these men never spared a prisoner, and during the long hours of the night, while standing lashed to a tree, I endeavored to prepare for the great change which the morrow would bring."

"Of course I made every effort to escape, but the things were too strong and the knots too securely tied; and so, when the sun crept above the tree-tops, I was still at my post."

"With the first rays of light the worthies were astir, and after bestowing two or three brutal kicks upon the sleeping women, and bidding them hurry with the meal, they betook themselves to the road to watch for some other luckless traveler."

"Fortunately for the latter, but unfortunately for me, there was no fresh game, and when summoned to breakfast both men were in a sulen, savage mood that boded me but little good. During the hasty repast, which they ate more like beasts than human beings, a discussion of some kind ensued, of which I could only catch an occasional word, but they were more than sufficient to show that it was in regard to myself."

"Shoot him before we move" was probably the most significant sentence that reached me, and as I was the only one at all likely to be shot, I took them to myself and screwed up courage to meet the critical moment.

"There was something so horrible, so unnatural in this seeing two men calmly devouring their food and at the same time discussing how they should put to death a man who certainly had never in any way harmed them, that I at times actually doubted their intention to carry their threat into execution."

"After fully an hour's feeding, for by no other name could I express the disgusting manner in which an enormous quantity of meat was devoured, they arose, and after untying me, took their rifles and ordered me to follow."

"The giant was just in the act of stepping forward, when the sound of a horse's feet striking upon the stones in the bed of the creek was heard."

"Here, you wimmen; take hold of this feller an' see that he don't git away, mind you! and with this injunction and implied threat the two glided away into the undergrowth, with steps as noiseless as those of an Indian warrior. Here was a chance—an unexpected, providential chance—and you may rest assured I was not long in availing myself of it."

"Some fifteen or twenty paces from the camp, the horses of the robbers were tethered to branches, ready saddled and bridled for the start which was to be made as soon as I was disposed of."

"One of these, a large, powerful blood bay, whose whole appearance indicated great speed and bottom, at once caught my eye."

"A single keen look showed the manner in which he was tied, and I knew it would take but an instant to free the halter."

"The men had been gone two or three minutes and no time was to be lost. The women had placed themselves upon either side of me as guards, though they did not think it worth

while to take hold of my arms. Everything was favorable, and, breathing a hasty prayer, I suddenly dealt one of them a stunning blow upon the side of the head, and then, before the other was fully aware of what had happened, I turned and served her in the same manner."

"I struck hard for I struck for life, and both of them fell as though they had been shot."

"As I had hoped, the knot in the halter easily gave way, and just as one of the prostrate women sounded the alarm, I mounted and dashed away through the timber."

"Making a semi-circle of a few hundred yards, I struck the road I had been traveling below the camp, and by noon was safely under shelter of Finch's stockade."

## MY SAILOR.

BY FRANCES MARIE COLE.

"Born to be drowned," you sighed,  
"Born to be drowned!" "No, no," I said,  
"God will not let the wild sea hide  
My darling's shining head."

"Oh, Paul!" the round cheeks burn  
From brown to brightest red; two eyes  
Swift and frank, of lightsome blue, turn  
Toward the flushed west skies.

Then look into my own.  
"I build me two little ships.  
One wouldn't sail, the other's gone  
To China." The warm lips

Kiss close; and face to face  
We look into the unknown West;  
He sees a barque of wondrous grace,  
Of many ships the best.

Kiss close, and cheek to cheek,  
He feels spice breezes lift his curls.  
Strange fruits he crossed the seas to seek  
Are stored with silks and pearls.

His search for foreign things  
Has tired him; the groves of palm  
Grow dim, and birds on rosy wings  
Fade through a world of balm.

Around the earth and back,  
Low sinks the head of sunny gleams;  
The flight across the ocean's track  
Runs through his busy dreams.

I ponder as I hold  
My boy; if those fair dreams were true,  
He owned the buttons of the gold,  
And wore the sailor's blue.

And trod the distant decks  
Of ships in Oriental seas;  
What messages of storms and wrecks  
Would bear each alien breeze?

How would wild waters flow  
And nightly talk in sleep to me!  
God keep him well; whether he go  
On land or over sea.

## Ripples.

AND now comes a Boston woman who, to out-do her fashionable sisters with their twenty-button gloves, has invented and wears forty-button stockings.

"Py Schimminy, how dot poy studies the languages!" is what a delighted elderly German said when his four-year old son called him a blue-eyed son of a saw-horse.

"I wish I might die," sighed a middle-aged maiden, as she hung like a limp bolster out of the third-story front window on a Sunday afternoon and espied a man whom she had once coquettishly rejected placidly propelling an eighteen-dollar baby-car.